

May 5, 2000

ACALANES HIGH SCHOOL

Volume 50, Number 9

BLUEPRINT



"No! No! Schmidt Can't Go!"

Acalanes Protests Principal's Removal

Pages 4 - 5

Inside...

- Exclusive Interview pg. 7
- Day of Silence pg. 7
- Protester pg. 12
- Volleyball pg. 29

Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

contents

news

Spirit Week.....	3
Schmidt Removal.....	4
Student Elections/ Casino Night.....	6
Day of Silence.....	7
Superintendent.....	8
Nuggets.....	9
Milking.....	10

feature

Amnesty Protest.....	11
Miami Protester.....	12
Time.....	13
McAlister's Departure.....	14

opinion

Blueprint Editorial.....	15
The Fah-Deng Page: ETS....	16
Deceitful District.....	17
Thank You, High School.....	17
Citizen Sam.....	18
Pro/Con.....	19
Letters to the Editor.....	20

entertainment

Outlet Vision Awards....	22
Movie Review.....	23
Music Review/ Satire.....	24
Film Festival.....	25
Cartoon Page.....	26

sports

Track.....	28
Boys' Volleyball.....	29
Softball.....	30
Boys' Tennis.....	21
Athletes of the Issue.....	32

ON THE COVER: A sea of Acalanes students protest Principal Keith Schmidt's removal in front of the district office on April 27. Sophomore Sander Lewis holds a sign reading, "Students Support Schmidt."

Photo of the Issue



Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

P.J., Ms. Pagano's four-year-old son, stamps Courtney Bedford's hand with his Easter stamp. P.J. quickly became the most popular kid in class.

Blueprint 1999-2000

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A CALANES BLUEPRINT NEWS

INSIDE



Students
Protest
Schmidt's
Removal

Pg. 4

Blueprint

May 5, 2000 Page 3

SPIRIT WEEK

Where's The 'Rah' in 'Rockalanes'?

By Danny Ebert

Staff Writer

The majority of the student body arrived at school Monday, April 17, unaware that the upcoming week was intended to heighten student spirit.

Like every Monday, students walked the halls in discouragement because the weekend had passed so quickly. It was not until the motivational speaker, Harriet Turk, appeared before the student body, giving her advice on how to live life well, that the students realized the theme was school spirit.

"I didn't know it was Spirit Week until I went to the assembly third period and heard what the speaker had to say," said sophomore Brett Woodruff.

In the assembly, Turk spent her time explaining her philosophies about life. "I talked mainly about the importance of making wise choices, keeping in control of who you are, befriending people, stand-

ing up for your beliefs, taking risks, and enjoying what you have," she said.

Many students enjoyed listening to Turk speak in the assembly. "I liked her. She was funny and entertaining. I thought she really connected with the students," said sophomore Sumin Lee.

Junior Charlie Bupp agreed. "I thought she was better than other speakers we've had in the past. She knew what she was talking about, and made people laugh," he said.

However, not everyone was pleased with the presentation. Sophomore Rob Chandler was disappointed with Turk. "Her use of metaphors on jocks and cheerleaders and how that relates to life was pointless," he said.

During the assembly, some students questioned the meaning of her remarks, while others laughed. "I thought her herpes in the eye remark was hilarious," said Lee.

Some students didn't even bother to show up to the assembly. "I didn't go," said sophomore Taylor McEaney, "but if I had, I

probably wouldn't have liked it."

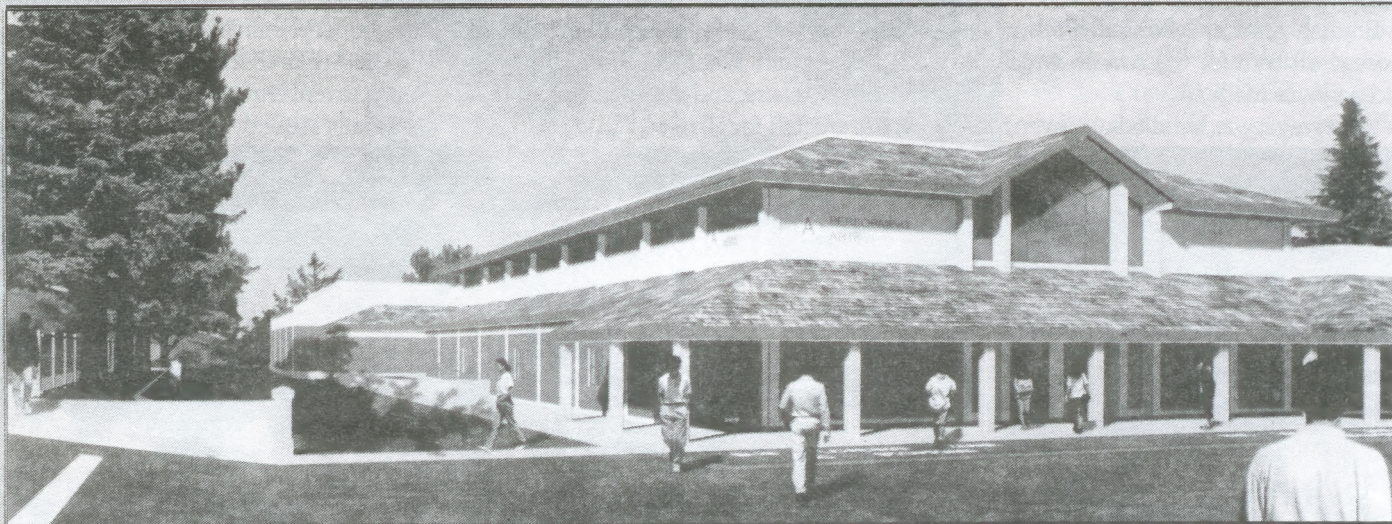
Many students were left wondering where the spirit in Spirit Week was. "I think Spirit Week was a waste of time. It had no purpose, and practically the entire school had no idea it even existed," said Woodruff.

Along with the assembly, Spirit Week was to include lunchtime activities, like "Singled Out" and band performances. "Leadership decided that, because the weather report didn't promise sunshine, the activities during lunch were delayed until the week after," said Leadership Advisor Rod Keillor.

Unfortunately, during the following week, students were not allowed in the quad as a result of a milking problem the previous Friday.

Because few people participated in Spirit Week, Keillor does not know if it will take place next year. "If the leadership class wants it, we will have it next year," said Keillor.

CONSTRUCTION



The class of 2002 will be greeted by a new performing arts theater upon entering their senior year. The theater, which is depicted in the computer generated image above, will be split into two separate buildings and a new block of classrooms.

SCHMIDT REMOVAL

Community Protests Principal's Transfer

By Nathalie de Leon, Blake Koelmel, and Damon Diederich

Staff Writers and Co-Copy Editor

Hundreds of students, parents, and faculty have united in protest of the impending transfer against Acalanes principal Keith Schmidt, claiming that the transfer is a unilateral decision by the district.

The decision to transfer Schmidt to the overcrowded Adult Education Program was made in February and was announced at a faculty meeting Thursday, April 20. The district administration has officially proposed the transfer and awaits approval by the School Board, that will convene on the issue in a meeting on May 16, according to School Board Member Robert Wood.

The Board initially planned to settle the issue at its May 2 meeting, according to Wood, but the issue was not placed on the agenda. Before the meeting, 11 staff members, 44 faculty members, and 12 students protested the transfer at the District Office.

The Board then held its open session for public comments. Community members crowded into the Board room around the administrators' seats. Teachers began the session sharing personal experiences and reasons for their opposition of the transfer.

"There's a shared sense of mission I never felt under other principals," said teacher Stan Oberg, a teacher at Acalanes for 33 years.

English teacher Marshall Pfeiffer expressed concern for the way in which the decision was made.

"The way it was handled was even more

troubling.... It either shows the District's blindness or the district's disdain for the school community," said Pfeiffer.

Upon hearing some comments from the meeting, Schmidt said, "I have been...overwhelmed by the many, many nice things people have said. I have wound up with credit for things I'm not really responsible for. I'm humbled."

While community members who favor the transfer have not been vocal about their views, many people have come forward in support of Schmidt, accusing the District administration of being insensitive to the needs of the school. Over 620 students signed a petition against the transfer, and over 200 students joined in an after school march on Thursday, April 27, from the quad to the District Office.

This march preceded a meeting between Superintendent Dr. James Perino and two students, senior Mary Thomas and junior Will McCosker. Before the meeting, the students sat in the field behind the District Office to show their approval of Schmidt's administration.

"It's hard for them (the district administrators) to not acknowledge the majority of students and teachers supporting someone," said Thomas.

Teachers also engaged in a letter writing campaign, sending over 40 letters to the Board and Perino in support of Schmidt.

"We sent 40 letters up to Perino and the Board last week, explaining all of our feelings about him, what Mr. Schmidt has accomplished here, and the great atmosphere he has created for all of us," said Pfeiffer.

Many who oppose the transfer claim that Schmidt is being forced to leave, although Schmidt has not made any formal statements indicating a disagreement with the decision. However, Schmidt said that, given a choice, he would rather stay at Acalanes.

"I've been quite fine at Acalanes, and I am sure I could continue to be quite happy at Acalanes," said Schmidt. "I was told that, 'there's a job that needs to be done I want you to go here.' I didn't feel like I had a staying versus going option."

Several protesters have called the transfer a demotion and have focused their comments on their high opinions of Schmidt as an administrator and a leader.

"It seems that there is some penalty going on here for some reason and we don't know why," said teacher Ramsay Thomas. "There is a misunderstanding of how important his demeanor, his decency, his good humor, and his compassion is to us, as teachers, makes us feel good about coming to school day after day after day even after we're tired and starting to lose our energy," he said.

According to Perino, however, the transfer is not a demotion, as Schmidt will be the head administrator of the Acalanes Adult Education.

Perino maintains that the transfer is not indicative of any shortcomings Schmidt may have. "With the skills he possesses and the energy he has, I think he will be extremely successful there (at AE)," said Perino.

The Acalanes Adult Education Program has a current enrollment of 469 ADA (Average Daily Attendance, which is equivalent



SCHMIDT (CONTINUED)

to 525 student hours). They will have 529 ADA next school year. With over 400 ADA, by law, the AE program is entitled to one full-time administrator and one half-time administrator for every 200 ADA over 200. The district will therefore maintain two administrators at the AE program next year.

According to Pat Van Horn, head administrator for AE, Schmidt would be welcome at the program, but she did not expect the District to transfer Schmidt. "I would think it would be logical to bring someone in to train to take over my position when I retire," said Van Horn.

Almost every Acalanes faculty member has come out against the transfer, saying that the faculty has never been this united. "We've never had that kind of 100% support before," said Pfeiffer.

Many teachers, along with Pfeiffer, believe that the disruption of the school's processes is not worth the potential benefits from the transfer. "We were surprised that they would jeopardize what was here on behalf of adult education," said Pfeiffer. "It's never a good time for this kind of decision if it is just going to be sprung upon us and it's certainly been divisive among many of the District Office and the faculty."

Parents also question the timing of the transfer, given the current construction project, the impending retirement of Perino, and the recent failure of the parcel tax, a major source of funds for the District.

"Continuity is especially important given the arrival of a new superintendent, the complicated construction projects, and the stresses inherent at end of the academic year," said parent Elizabeth Ferree.

Perino maintains, however, that the pro-

cess should go smoothly, and that most current projects will not be a problem under the new administration.

"I believe that Mr. Schmidt has helped prepare the staff to move forward," said Perino, "and this not a concern."

When the transfer was announced at the faculty meeting, many teachers got up to say they wouldn't stand for it, while others sat in shock; several were in tears.

"It was a pretty sharp blow. I left a few minutes before the announcement trying to get control emotionally because it took me by surprise," said teacher Ann Rasmussen.

Several parents expressed similar sentiments, saying that they do not understand why Schmidt is being transferred.

"It does not make sense to take someone out of a situation where he has invested time and emotion and has achieved major accomplishments," said Parent Ele Crose.

District administrators said, however, that the transfer will not only fulfill a need in AE, but will help to improve the program.

"If I didn't believe there was an opportunity to make the new growth I anticipate for the school...I wouldn't have done it," said Perino. He later added, "I have confidence that whoever comes into Acalanes will also enhance the current program.... The person who comes in...will bring a set of skills that maybe, in large part, or in small part, Mr. Schmidt doesn't have. The person can add other dimensions to the school."

VanderMolen believes that Schmidt has united the faculty, making any possible disruption minimal.

"I think you guys are going to do well.... I don't think one person will stop you from growing," said VanderMolen.

Schmidt said he hopes there will not be a problem with the transition. "It's, for me, a very nice compliment that they were upset that I was leaving," said Schmidt. "However, I don't want something which is going to be disruptive; something which is going to be a negative distraction. It's one thing to have a positive distraction but a negative distraction is, in the long run, unproductive. It can be one of those things which will leave a lot of ill will which will take some one else a lot of years to sort through and get rid of."

Rasmussen, among others, has questioned the process used by the District to announce its decision. "The most offensive part was how the transfer was announced," said Rasmussen. "The fact that the assistant superintendents were there but not the superintendent himself struck me as inappropriate."

District Personnel Manager Bev Sadler maintains that the District followed proper procedures in its actions toward transferring Schmidt. "For a transfer within a same position, there does not need to legally be any Board action," said Sadler. "It is a placement decision, so the superintendent does not need any official action or approval from anyone to do that."

Ultimately, Perino said, if Schmidt were to ask him to not be transferred, "I would say that we should talk."

BELOW --A mass of students congregate behind the District Office, on Thursday, April 27, to protest the District's decision to move Principal Schmidt to the Acalanes Adult School.



Blueprint Photo/Joanna Dahhauser

STUDENT ELECTIONS

President Kennedy Comes to Acalanes

By Damon Diederich

Co-Copy Editor

Acalanes rocked its own vote on Thursday, April 27, when students voted for class officers. A runoff for some offices was held on Friday, April 28.

Voting took place in English classes this year, a measure taken in response to claims that some students stuffed the ballot box in last year's elections. Leadership Advisor Rod Keillor said that the change was designed to "make the voting fairer."

Students also had complained that voting in the quad was too inconvenient. The new voting arrangement led to a substantially increased voter turnout, according to Keillor.

The new president of the Acalanes Stu-

dent Body is Brianne Kennedy, who defeated challenger Russ Sato in a runoff.

Vice-president is Alexandra Ayoub, who defeated Roy Chong in a runoff.

Chelsea Duffaut defeated Courtney Anderson in a close runoff for Treasurer.

Rose Kelly was elected Secretary in the first vote.

Alexis Klein won for Social Secretary, also on the first vote.

The winners and Keillor seemed very ex-



Juniors April Ho and Lauren Talbot, freshman Noah Lorenzana, and juniors Chelsea Duffaut and Courtney Anderson wait anxiously to give their ASB election speeches.

cited about next year and anticipate that it will turn out well.

CASINO NIGHT

Lafayette Fun--Las Vegas Style

By Hiro Kagiya

Business Editor

Acalanes students from all grade levels came to spend money on Friday, April 21, in hopes of winning a bunch of chips which could be traded in for tickets that, in turn, could allow students to win one of 12 great prizes, including videos, TV's, a Nintendo 64 and the coveted and most sought-after prize of all--the George Foreman Lean Mean Grilling Machine.

All of the gaming tables were surrounded by students winning and losing "fortunes" in a matter of minutes. Veteran dealers (teachers and parents) were at

the poker and blackjack tables, and they happily took money from the greedy students.

Although many people were able to clean up at the blackjack or poker tables, the big money was in craps. With odds ranging from a nominal 2:1 all the way up to 30:1, this was the center of excitement.

The dealers, the most well-known being Doug Senz, were handing out chips faster than they could get them from the "bank."

Most students thought that Casino Night was well worth the six dollars it cost for the first \$500 token. "I could not believe how

easy it was to win money.... I mean I started off with a \$500 chip and by the end of the night by playing craps I had won something like 40 grand. I can't wait until I am 21!" said junior Eric Cheng.

Even though not all of the students made a killing (in fact most left with nothing), it seemed that everyone was in high spirits as they waited for prizes to be drawn during the raffle according to junior Eugene Choe.

Although most felt that the prizes could have been better, both the students and the faculty had a great night. Casino Night is sure to be an Acalanes tradition that will last for many years to come.

MANNY MEYERS

Track Coach To Take A One Year Lapse

Chris Kim and Kevin Medeiros

Co-Copy Editor and News Editor

Coach Manny Meyers announced Monday, May 1, that he will be taking a one-year hiatus from coaching track and field and hopes to return as an assistant coach the following year.

Over the past three years, Meyers has become frustrated with the

amount of bureaucratic intervention in his coaching duties. "All I'm doing is spending my entire life doing paperwork. I'm not coaching. I am managing, and I don't want to be a manager anymore," Meyers said.

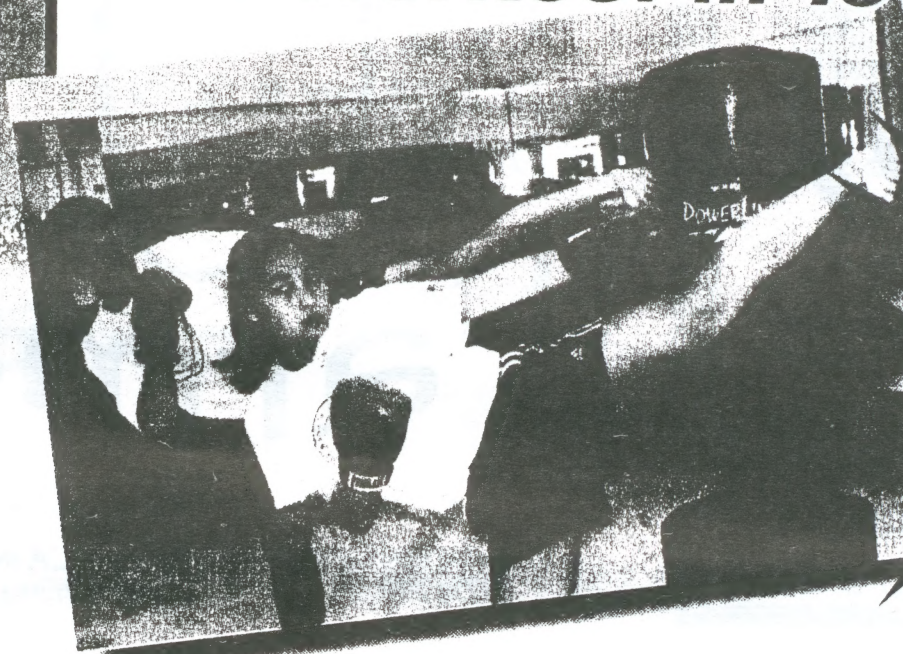
Most students expressed disappointment that Meyers was leaving, but they realized that he has good reason to take a break. "I'm kind of sad to see him go.... His enthusiasm brings

everybody's performance up," said Senior Vijay Sekhon. "It's kind of understandable because he's under so much pressure."

Meyers said that he will not be leaving cross country next year. "Cross country never changes, cross country is family.... It's the beginning of the school year when my mind is fresh, my body is fresh, and my psyche is fresh," said Meyers.

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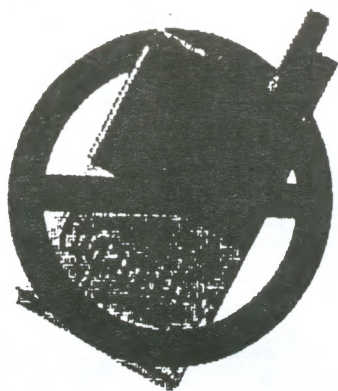
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DAY OF SILENCE

Students Speak Without Words

Fourth Year of Protest Proves Effective

Nathalie Krastev
Staff Writer

Close to 40 students remained silent (or at least attempted to remain silent) on Friday, April 21 in order to show their support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights.

The annual Day of Silence is a national event designed to raise awareness about LGBT's and to protest the silence that they face. People of all sexual orientations who support the cause protest by taking a nine-hour vow of silence.

"What happens on the Day of Silence is that participants are silent from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. in order to demonstrate to others in their school community the ways in which homophobia has silenced so many people by keeping them in the closet, and also silenced straight allies that don't feel they can speak up for their lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender friends and family," said Carolyn Laub, director of the Bay Area Gay-Straight Alliance.

The Day of Silence was established in 1996, when a student from the University of Virginia wrote a paper regarding nonviolent protest.

Her ideas prompted fellow students at the university to organize the first Day of Silence into a national event which received extensive press coverage.

Although many students at Acalanes had a hard time disciplining themselves to remain quiet, most of them said they believe that the Day of Silence is a good idea. Junior Sarah Reid said, "I support the cause, and I think that it is really good that people are remaining silent."

"I wish more people would do it because then it really would make a difference.... If more people around me had been quiet, I would have kept quiet longer," continued Reid.

Sophomore Liz Lawrence had a similar opinion. "I think it gets people awake and thinking about different topics that matter to society.... When people speak up about issues it ends up being rowdy.... Staying quiet is very peaceful and it makes a big difference because when you don't see people talk-

silent is actually a way of speaking out. In fact, she believes that it can be even more effective than a verbal protest. "One national study found that students hear anti-gay slurs 25 times a day on average during a typical school day. By being silent, it makes us wake up to what we're not hearing when that silence is happening contrasted to what we hear on a normal basis in schools," she said.

Furthermore, she said, "It raises the issues of homophobia and also shows the rest of the student body how many people participate and care about the issue and how it impacts them.... I think that it makes a very strong statement to the school and often reaches people in a way that a flier on the wall or a presentation in a classroom doesn't."

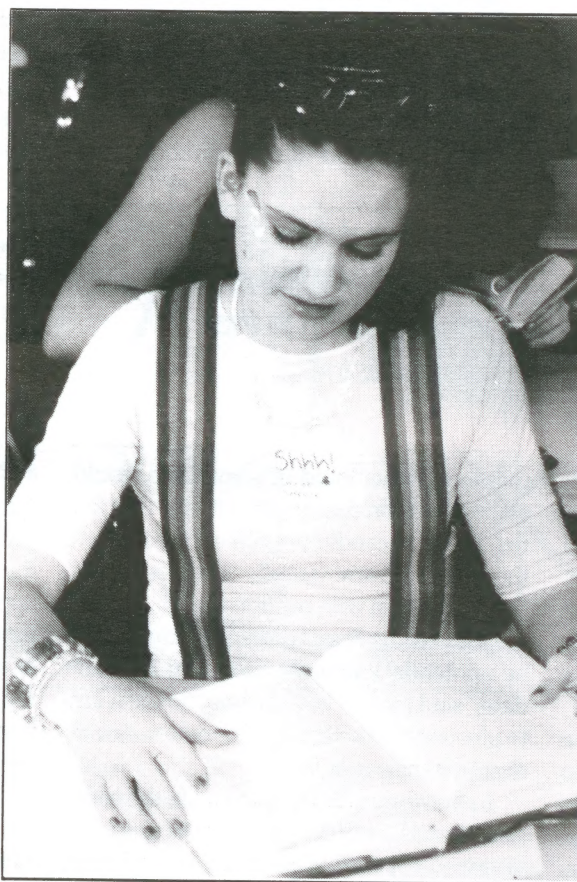
Overall, the protest was successful, and no complications occurred throughout the day. According to senior Karina Kremling, a member of the Gay-Straight Alliance, other students did not hassle protesters.

"A lot of people were really curious, and it was hard because we couldn't really answer their questions, but it helped to bring awareness," she said. "It brought a lot of awareness because people were forced to see that there are so many supporters."

Teacher Ann Rasmussen does not see a problem with students staying quiet during class in protest. "I think

that it's appropriate for students to participate in such an activity.... It's not an issue for me, as far as participation in class, and sometimes it's more important to get involved in some of these issues," she said.

According to Eric Seebass, advisor of the Acalanes Gay-Straight Alliance, the Day of Silence offers a time to reflect on important issues in a peaceful way. "It promotes an interesting, different kind of intellectual response," he said. "(After all) talk is cheap."



Junior Cynthia Cox participates in the Friday, April 21 event. Participants could be seen, but not heard, protesting the way LGBT's are treated.

ing, it's kind of 'weird' and it definitely makes you think," she said.

There are still some who feel that the concept of remaining quiet to prove a point makes no sense. "Why would you voluntarily silence yourself to protest? The First Amendment guarantees your right to free speech. It makes more sense to utilize your right to free speech than to remain silent," said one Acalanes student who wished to remain anonymous.

Laub, however, believes that keeping

Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

PERINO'S SUCCESSOR

New Superintendent Decision Delayed

By Nathalie Krastev
Staff Writer

The District has been forced to begin the search for a new superintendent over again because problems arose during visits to the candidates' respective districts.

According to Board member Margot Tobias, the District narrowed down the prospects, but opted not to make a selection. "The process is taking longer because we want to find the right candidate," said Tobias.

At the present time, no one has been able to meet the Board's standards to fill the position of superintendent, and the Board has plans to begin another search phase. Associate Superintendent Johanna VanderMolen said, "No one applied who was really thought to be a good fit, so the Governing Board felt it was very worthy to go out a second time and keep looking, as opposed to taking someone that isn't right for the job."

The superintendent search criteria lists fifteen qualifications that each successful candidate was supposed to have demonstrated. In general, the list included having a "compelling" vision for the District, as well as knowledge of school finance, curriculum, instruction, assessment, staff development, and technology. Good leadership qualities and the ability to work as a team player were also key characteristics.

From a primary list of 26 candidates, the Board narrowed its selection down to two highly probable nominees, according to former Parents Club President and committee member Hilma Jones. "In the process, there were two candidates that were identified by the advisory committee as really outstanding candidates," she said.

The Governing Board pursued the finalists, but while visiting their districts, they discovered that their answers did not correspond to what was actually taking place in their districts. Jones said, "The grounds that they based it on was that the original answers to the questions that were related to the criteria did not match what was happening in that person's district." In other words, she said, "The verbiage did not match the action."

VanderMolen provided a similar explanation. "With the last candidate, they went

out to the District to be sure and confirm everything that they thought they knew.... Sometimes you go out to the site to hire someone and realize it's not quite like you thought it would be.... I think that's what happened," she said. "Not that anyone was misrepresenting themselves, but it's just that you learn more."

Other sources, such as Board members Bill Jasper and Robert Wood, as well as Assistant Superintendent Beverly Sadler, declined to confirm the reason for which there was no candidate selected.

In consideration to each candidate, no

"The original answers to the questions...did not match what was happening in that person's district."

—Hilma Jones

member of the Board or committee would elaborate upon the specific criteria that the first round of candidates did not meet when their schools were visited. "There is a great deal of concern with confidentiality.... When our Governing Board didn't hire, that could be a potential embarrassment to this candidate," said Jones, "so in no way do we want to give away exactly what the criteria is that changed their mind."

In the next round of the search, the committee will be starting with a new group of interviewees and applicants, as well as a new District Consultant who will replace the previous consultant, Rudy Gatti.

Gatti's contract ended after the final interview, and it is not being renewed for the second process. "He did an excellent job, and no one was disappointed with what he did. They (the Board) just didn't rehire him for the second round because they felt like they needed a second opinion and another person that might look at it differently," said VanderMolen.

Gatti's contract stated that he would work until a candidate was delivered. "(Gatti's contract) was in conclusion with the final candidate moving forward," said VanderMolen. But, since the Board felt that no

candidate was suited for the position, they chose to go in a different direction.

The District spent around ten thousand dollars on the first search, and hiring a new consultant will cost another ten thousand dollars. Perino believes that the amount of money is worth it when it comes to finding the next superintendent. "You're talking about somebody that's going to be with the District for a long time. You hope that the people wouldn't think of it as a waste, but think of it as an investment," he said.

As for the advisory committee, there was some frustration due to a final decision not being made after all the time and energy put into the first process. "At first I was a little bit skeptical and felt that our first interviews were really useless and that we weren't really listened to...but we just have to trust them," said committee member and Acalanes senior Mary Thomas.

According to Joanna MacCalelland, a member of the advisory committee, who is a Rossmoor resident representing the "grandparent" population of the community, there was a full understanding between the Board and the committee. "It was disappointing, of course, because the advisory group did a lot of work," she said. However, she added, "I don't think that we were faulting the School Board by any means because they have the ultimate responsibility for making this choice."

The committee hopes to continue with the same enthusiasm and a broader sense of knowledge and preparation.

As it stands, the Board has no set date on which they will announce their decision. They are confident that they will make a choice by July 1. However, if no one better comes forward, Perino will remain in his position for a temporary length of time. "I indicated to the Board that if, for any reason, they couldn't get someone appointed by the 30th of June that I would stay on in July and/or August to provide for a smooth transition," Perino said.

Although the quest continues, the District is remaining extremely determined. "We want to find the best man or woman to come on board...and that's what we're going to do," said VanderMolen.

NUGGETS

Got 5th Dance Cans? Or Easter Condoms?

By Danielle Cooke

Staff Writer

If you've got cans, then you've got a ticket.

The 5th dance (theme: 20's Mobsters) took place Friday, April 28 in the small gym, for the small admission price of four cans of food.

Due to the success and attendance of the past four dances, the members of Interact took it upon themselves to take charge and give the students of Acalanes another dance.

Before the event, Interact President Heather Klurfeld said, "We're really excited about the dance. It's going to be a success."

Although the number of students that attended was smaller than usual, the ones that did show up found a transformed gym.

A cameraman circled the gym, capturing people "getting down" on the dance floor. It seemed as though no one was camera shy; in fact, everyone jumped in front of the camera, wanting to be seen.

A projection screen was propped up above the DJ so that everyone could see what the cameraman was recording. Scenes from Austin Powers were played when the cameraman took a break.

Platforms were stationed in the middle of the gym for dancers that really wanted to get their groove on. "The platforms were great. I really just loved the whole atmosphere!" said an excited sophomore.

The theme of the night could not be guessed from looking around the gym. Cowboy hats were bobbing through the crowd, and shirtless boys ran through the gym trying to beat the heat.

Some guys sported team jerseys from basketball or football, while others just wore jeans and a T-shirt.

To most students, the theme of the dance was not really important. "I didn't really care about the theme. I heard it was Insanity Dance II, and then I heard it was a western theme. But it didn't matter. It was fun to see everyone dress up in what they wanted. It was a lot of fun," said junior Lyndsey Hall.

The music was great, and it looked as if people were happy to be there. Whether they were dancing on the blocks, running to get on the camera, or just dancing it up with their friends, it did not matter.

The Contra Costa Food Bank received barrels of cans after the dance. People that are hungry will get to eat, and that is what really matters.

"Sure it was a great dance, but even better was that it was for a good cause," said junior Lisa Whiteside.

By Jenny Jun

Co-Copy Editor

When Acalanes students searched for eggs all over campus during the Egg Hunt on Thursday, April 20, many were surprised when the yolk was on them.

Leadership students Lauren MacKenzie, Lauren Wondolowski, and Sonia Lamel had planned the annual event for everyone to enjoy, but another Easter Bunny decided to play his own game by adding prank eggs as a joke.

The original eggs were filled with candy and prizes, but prank eggs contained Crisco, ketchup, raw eggs, orange juice, and even condoms with messages that said "Congratulations, you get to have sex with a senior."

A student who thought she had candy, ended up with something a lot less sweet. "When I opened the egg, I wasn't expecting orange juice all over my clothes," said sophomore Sarah Afsari.

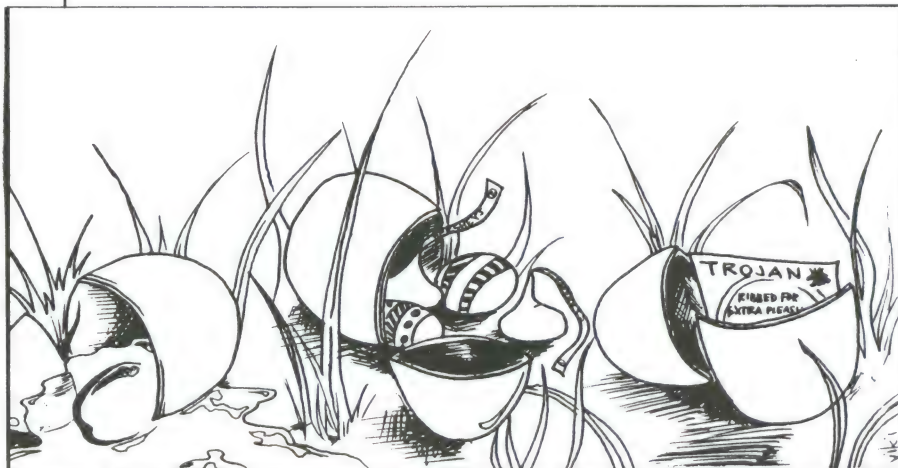
Leadership students were disappointed that someone took advantage of their goodwill. "We put in a lot of effort for something the school could enjoy, and the fact that people are disrespectful makes us lose motivation for future events," said senior Lauren MacKenzie.

As leadership students were hiding the eggs around the school during fourth period that day, they noticed several pastel-colored eggs containing yolks and other pranks that stood out from the 1200 bright, medium-sized eggs that leadership was using.

Egg hidiers attempted to find as many joke eggs as possible and throw them away before lunch began, but "it was hard to find every single one, and some people ended up with an unpleasant surprise," said senior Lauren Wondolowski.

Leadership Advisor Rod Keillor was also upset with the negative outcome to a cheerful event for the student body. "It makes you wonder if it's really worth putting on school-sponsored events when a few people aren't mature and are just going to ruin it for the rest of the school," he said.

The real eggs were stored in Keillor's room before school and MacKenzie believes that someone must have planned the joke ahead of time and gotten out of class early to hide the joke eggs.



Blueprint Illustration/Victoria Yu

MILKING

Following the Milky Way

By Nick Allen & Scott Schwertsch
Feature Editor & Entertainment Editor

Milking is one of our school's favorite pastimes, and it's an integral part of the Acalanes experience, yet the recent milk bombings in the quad have raised many concerns about Acalanes' most popular school sport.

In response to a near-riot in which garbage cans were set aflame and a barrage of milks was launched at freshmen, the administration showed that it was willing to close the quad and limit milk sales in order to regain control over students.

At lunch on Friday, April 21, the aerial assault began, when about five milks flew into the center of the quad from the direction of the senior deck. A few minutes later, half a dozen milks were hurled at a group of freshmen that was congregating in the corner of the quad, according to several eye witnesses.

When Assistant Principal Ron Dygert arrived on the scene, he was greeted by three milks, all of which missed their target.

At the same time, clouds of smoke began billowing from a plastic garbage can, which had been ignited by a group of freshmen.

At this point, the administration had enough, so a voice rang out over the speaker, announcing that lunch was cancelled, and that students had to return to their classes.

Although the announcement was perfectly clear, only a few of the students in the quad actually left. In fact, many students encouraged their peers to disregard the message and defy administrators, who began to personally urge students to return to class.

In Monday's daily bulletin came the sobering announcement: "Due to the ongoing problem of milk throwing...the quad will

remain closed to students during brunch and lunch until further notice."

Most students reacted with disbelief at the thought of clearing the quad. Sophomore Taylor McEneaney said, "Closing the quad seems pretty drastic. How do they expect to enforce that?"

The administration enforced their word by keeping the entire quad clear of students on both Monday and Tuesday during break

less, but when you get beyond that, it's immature, it's disgusting, and it's dangerous. I can't remember a period when there has been quite so much rude, disrespectful behavior without some sort of cause."

The students who were largely responsible for Friday's milking were each given a two-and-a-half day suspension.

One student who was suspended said, "It's a joke that they suspend kids for throwing milks. Suspension isn't even a punishment."

Sophomore Alyssa Stone, who signed an official statement revealing the identities of students who threw milk, feels differently. "It is such a disgusting problem. It is so immature of them to be throwing milk cartons at people. I see people who get hit and are so upset, but they don't go to the administration and do anything about it," said Stone.

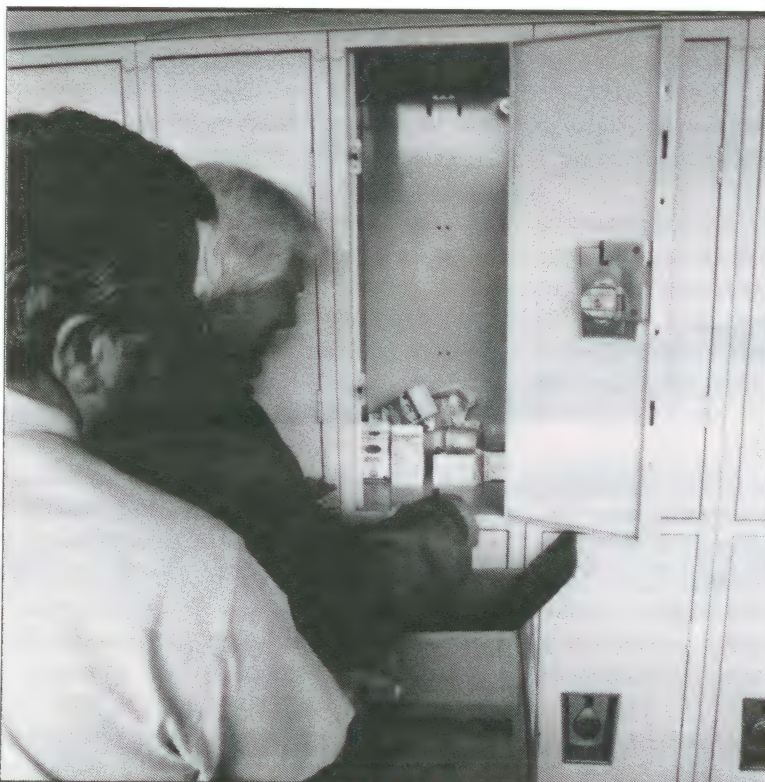
Stone says that there are other people who feel the same way, but they are afraid to step forward. "I wasn't scared to put myself in this position. I knew when I signed my statement that there would be consequences, and I was prepared to accept those consequences. A lot of people are just scared of what will happen," she said.

On Wednesday, April 26, the quad was reopened and

normal milk sales were resumed. On the same day, however, a large number of milks were reportedly stolen from the Senior Breakfast.

During an unannounced locker check in the 100's hall, 15 milk cartons were found. Apparently, they were being stored until they were rotten enough to inflict maximum displeasure upon their victims.

"People should only throw cold, fresh, white milk. There are definitely morals and ethics involved in milking. Throwing rotten milks is over the line," said junior Quinn Fitzgerald.



Paul Cunningham and Ron Dygert pull milks out of a student's locker before a possible lunchtime milk bombing on Thursday, April

and lunch. Although there were no milks thrown on those days, there was a rash of garbage cans set on fire.

Principal Keith Schmidt said that this was not the first time garbage cans had been set on fire, but he could not recall an event of this nature that had occurred on such a grand scale. Schmidt added that while the suspension time for milking is two-and-a-half days, it would be much harsher for lighting garbage cans because "fire is not something we play with."

Schmidt also said, "On the surface, (throwing milks) seems prankish and harm-

Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

A CALANES BLUEPRINT FEATURE



McAlister's
leave of
absence
pg. 14

Blueprint

May 5, 2000

Page 11

PROTEST

Acalanes Students Fight IMF & World Bank

By Phil Peyron, Scott Schwertscharf, and Nick Allen
Entertainment Editors and Feature Editor

Their freshly-pressed khakis and North Face fleeces were in striking contrast to the matted dreadlocks and unshaven pits that surrounded them, but the common goal which bound Acalanes students to the five hundred protesters was stronger than superficial matters like fashion. The twenty-five Acalanes students who converged on Market Street on Monday, April 17 in San Francisco were united with the other protesters by their objections to corporate globalization, specifically that of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The protest in San Francisco coincided with IMF and World Bank meetings in Washington, D.C. These two international organizations were created to give aid to third-world countries. They have recently become the targets of criticism, however, because they allegedly exploit the people and environments of the countries they are supposed to support.

For some Acalanes students it was their first protest, but for others it was simply an extension of years of experience as political activists. Yet the experienced and inexperienced alike had trouble containing their enthusiasm as the BART train came closer to their final destination on Market Street.

Moments before the train arrived, junior Zoe Palitz began to brief the group on proper protesting techniques, making a special point to stay clear of any violent activity or other counterproductive behavior. Some winced at the prospect of an encounter with the riot police, while a few grinned mischievously.

The group arrived 30 minutes late, and would have been later, had there not been a steady stream of vegans, environmentalists, socialists, anarchists, nuns, punks, and other colorful characters leading the way to the protest meeting point. Acalanes sophomore Megan Kelso, who was attending her first protest, was surprised by the tremendous diversity of the crowd that had gathered. "It's cool that so many different types of people can come together to fight for their beliefs," she said.

The atmosphere was generally wholesome as protesters sat listening to guest speakers and grooved to the beat of tribal

drummers. The only exception to the upbeat congregation was a small group of brooding anarchists who distanced themselves from the other protesters and seemed especially secretive as they refused to comment on just about everything.

Despite the presence of the fifty riot police, the protest remained peaceful. The only potentially dangerous moment during the day came when protesters stopped outside of the GAP on Market Street. As drummers whipped the crowd into a violent frenzy, the black-clad anarchists made meager attempts of vandalism: shooting pebbles at second-story windows with slingshots, throwing rolls of toilet paper, and blocking the front door of the building.

The climax of the rally outside the GAP building came when a misguided protester threw an orange smoke bomb into the midst of a group of colleagues, dispersing the crowd for a few seconds. "I seriously thought the police had thrown a tear gas grenade and that a riot might break out," said sophomore Chris Eaton.

The only opportunity for the fully-armed riot police to really practice crowd control came later in the day, when a highly agitated, half-naked woman assaulted a group of officers with profanity and plastic sandals. The naked assailant, however, was not involved in the protest.



Acalanes protesters show their objections to the IMF and World Bank in front of San Francisco City Hall on Monday, April 17.

Continued on pg. 12...

MRS. DENNY'S GRANDMOTHER

Cuban American Speaks Out

By Lexi Matsui, James Sherwood, Nick Allen, and Quinn Fitzgerald
Co-Editors-in-Chief, Feature Editor, and Staff Writer

Maria Otero, grandmother of Acalanes history and dance teacher Lyenne Denny, is a seventy-seven year old Cuban-American who has been protesting in Florida for the rights of six-year-old Elian Gonzales.

Denny supports her grandmother's protests in Miami and said that her purpose is "to educate people to the other side of this one-sided issue." Like other protesters in Miami and around the country, Maria believes that the young refugee is a symbol of hope and freedom from Castro's oppressive regime.

Otero is especially concerned with the way the boy was obtained by the Immigration Nationalization Services.

"The President sent (the police to seize the boy a fuerza (with force)," said Otero.

Otero moved to the United States to help her family become more prosperous. Denny shares her

grandmother's emotion regarding the situation. They both feel that Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzales, is being controlled by Castro.

"Castro has been lying to (the American public). He is in control of the father and has sent him here to get the boy," said Otero.

Otero has been protesting at the home of the Miami relatives. She has been picketing and has been subject to violence within the community. She feels that Americans do not have the correct perspective on the Elian story.

"American media is extremely biased," said Denny. "Plus, Americans have a different perspective on family values than Cubans."

Otero feels that in America, a man and a son should be united. However, in Cuba, family values are not the same.

"Elian will not see his father at all once he is back in Cuba. Putting him into the arms of his father is putting him into the arms of Castro," said Denny.



Courtesy Photo

Maria Otero has been protesting in Florida for the rights of Elian Gonzales.

...continued from pg. 11

PROTEST (CONTINUED)

A core group of about two hundred protestors gathered in front of City Hall as the march began to die down, and although the majority of Acalanes students had already left, four or five stayed behind to listen to speeches and catch any last-minute action. The protest officially came to an end when a sacrificial piggy bank, symbolizing the gluttony and greed of the World Bank, was ritualistically destroyed by protesters in front of City Hall.

Although the event got little media coverage, Acalanes students remained optimistic. Senior Vijay Sekhon was confident that the protesters had made their intended impact, and said: "All

movements and protests start at a grassroots level. Basically, we are just trying to educate people about the IMF and the World Bank, and to get people to lose their sense of security in institutions like these."

Jello Biafra, former lead singer of the influential SF punk band Dead Kennedys, did not share the other protestors optimism. "You won't hear about (the protest) very much, if at all, on the six o'clock news or the ten o'clock news, as the Barbie dolls and the Al Gore clones go on and on about how great the stock market is doing.... And how about yet another story about the baseball park named after a

goddamned phone company," said Biafra in an exclusive *Blueprint* interview.

The press may continue to ignore them, and the corporate powers may laugh as they look down from their twentieth-story windows on the insignificant little protesters, but the Acalanes activists hold strong to their beliefs. Palitz explained this sentiment, saying "Issues like these affect so many people all over the world, and it affects my conscience to know that my government and government institutions like the IMF and World Bank are committing acts around the world that I don't approve of."

TIME

Tick Tock: The Clock Doesn't Stop

By Quinn Fitzgerald

Staff Writer

Invading the serenity of sleep, loud nagging bleeps wrench me out of my sanctuary. As my delirium fades, replaced by brutal reality, I ask myself "Why?" With no immediate answer, I sink back into the warmth of my comforter.

I catch myself though, and while scolding my lack of discipline, I quickly prepare for the interminable period before my next hours of sleep. But each morning, as I hop in the shower, down three cups of coffee, and speed off to school, the question still lingers. Why do I do it? What greater power pushes me to evade sleep and to hurry through each day like a toiling ant?

Well, of course there is homework, sports, friends, and the whole college issue. But I don't need to race through my life to be successful and happy. I don't need to do homework until midnight and wake up at five for swim practice in order to be satisfied with my daily accomplishments.

I could just as easily roll over and let the bleeps fade into my subconscious. But I don't. I can't. Something keeps my life on schedule, but it's not my motivation, or even my obligations. Some greater power pushes the pace faster than my body is ready to go. What underlying force keeps me on this crazy path towards exhaustion?

The answer is all-powerful time. Time is the man-made notion that life can be broken down into consecutive uniform measurements. We now take this invention for granted as the demon dominating our lives. Some might call it progress, but I call it a pathetic attempt to create order and structure out of a complex world.

Although time's precise segmentation is a fairly new concept, it has been around since the beginning of time. Time exists in nature as the mortal countdown to death. This un-

deniable truth creates a limited period for man to accomplish what he wants in life. However, this does not justify the frantic craziness of today's world.

As I wait for lunch in my fourth period Spanish class, it occurs to me that we are all slaves to time. Our lives function according to what time dictates. When my alarm clock reads 6:00 a.m., it bleeps and I wake up. At 8:00, the bell rings for school, and I walk to class. Without questioning or even noting our submission, we are pushed through each day by time's obnoxious reminders.

I grow more and more eager for lunch as time slows to a near halt. As the hand on the clock turns in long, endless circles, a feeling of helpless panic comes over me. I realize I am not in control of my life, time is. The clock understands its power and grins at me sinisterly, saying with each tick, "I run your life."

The bell eventually rings for lunch, and at first a feeling of relief passes through me. But as I walk down the hall, ticks echo in my head, counting the seconds until another bell tells me to return to class. Time causes a continual cycle of anticipation and dread, made worse by long moments of discontent and short moments of happiness.

How am I to enjoy my half-hour break when I can hear in my mind and see on my wrist the moments sliding past me without enjoyment or even significance? Every instant that pass-



Blueprint Illustration/Noel Fadden

es is lost forever, leaving me with less and less time. But it's not just lunch. Life is slowly dwindling away before my eyes as I struggle in vain to race against time.

Even if time could be magically eliminated from nature, too many of us have grown dependent on time's simple conformity to handle such freedom. We've been brainwashed by time's hypnotic power to recognize a happier and freer life.

Man has concerned himself with finding productive ways of passing time. Education, professions, and recreation have been useful ways of filling the hours with satisfying events.

But no one took into consideration the necessary grief that it created. The result is the chaotic world in which we live today, a highly structured life-style with no time for anything. There is no time for work, no time for sleep, no time for friends, and no time to write this article.

MCALISTER DEPARTS

Mac Meditates On the Future

By Sam Cunningham
Opinion Editor

Government/Economics teacher Michael McAlister recently announced he will be taking a leave of absence next year. Blueprint sat down with "Mac" last week to discuss travel, Buddhism, and the meaning of life. Excerpts:

Blueprint: Starting with the basics, why are you leaving?

McAlister: Well, the plan is to take a much-needed break from teaching. I love this profession dearly, but it just wears you out.

B: So how are going to rejuvenate yourself?

M: I'll begin by taking about thirty of my seniors to Thailand. We'll travel all over Thailand for about two weeks, then I will put them back on a plane, but I'll stay.

B: Then what?

M: I will then go south a bit and explore the Gulf of Siam. It's a really cool place--lots of scenic islands. I'm gonna do some scuba diving and check things out. From there I'll trek back up to Bangkok and then hopefully hike through Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. Nothing but me, a pack, and a pair of Texas.

B: What if disaster befalls you during your journey?

M: I don't know. I'd figure it out though. It'd be hard. It'd be trying. But I have absolute confidence I can make it work.

B: Says the blind man as he reaches for his hammer...

M: (laughs) Well, you can live your life in fear, or you can live your life as an adventure. Sure, there are risks, but disaster could just as easily strike here. Does the fact that I'm closer to Kaiser here make it any different?

B: You mentioned Buddhism. Where does that come in?

M: Well, I'm gonna be studying in Thailand with some teachers. One group will be in the south by the Gulf, and the second will be outside of Cheng-Mai, near Bangkok. From

there I'll fly to Nepal sometime around the beginning of August.

B: Wow.

M: In Nepal, I'm gonna try and study some more Buddhist meditation and maybe hike around the Himalayas. I also want to visit the Tibetan exile community and the Dalai Lama.

B: So what's it all about?

M: More than anything, this is about nourishing my mind and my spiritual practice, and also just going on a real kick-a** vacation. You know, exploring all I can externally and hopefully mirroring that growth internally.

B: So when will you be returning from Southeast Asia?

M: Right about the middle of October. That's when I will start Buddhist Zen training, where I will actually shave my head and wear robes and everything. I'll be doing this at a temple up in Marin county for about two months, after which I will start another session at a monastery down near Big Sur called Tassajara Zen Mountain Center.

B: How long will you be there?

M: That's going to be the longest actual stay of the whole time, about six months.

B: What exactly does Zen meditation entail?

M: I'll sit very, very still and be very, very quiet. That may seem to go against my personality. Most people would look at me as being kind of loud and obnoxious, and I have that side. But I also have a very quiet side. It'll be very interesting to see what transpires. When you spend that much time in a silence that is so deep, you discover a lot of very interesting things.

B: How are you expecting your trip to go?

M: Again, the thing is that this could all change. I have a plan, but my best-laid plans always screw up -- for the better. So, I have no idea where this trip will take me. And

when I have that much uncertainty, really cool things can happen.

B: Will you die a happy man?

M: I could die right now, this very second, and I would feel that this has been the neatest life. I Can't wait to do it again.

B: On a final note, you have one minute to make me laugh. Go.

M: I'm just not a jukebox. You can't put coins in me and make me tell jokes. You know, I just always forget them. Honest to God, I don't know.

B: Forty-five seconds.

M: Okay, we'll do a knock-knock joke. You start.

B: Knock, knock.

M: Who's there?

B: (chuckles) Aren't you the one telling the joke?

M: Gotcha.



Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

Government/ Econ teacher Mike McAlister, who will be taking a leave of absence next year, poses in of a classroom.



ACALANES BLUEPRINT OPINION

Blueprint

May 5, 2000

Page 15

BLUEPRINT EDITORIAL

Some Unanswered Questions

The breeze was gentle and the sun warm last Thursday after school. The track team was out on the field practicing for its next meet. A few freshmen mingled in the empty hallways, killing time until Mom arrived. In the bushes outside *Blueprint*, a squirrel and a bird got into an altercation over which one saw that berry first. It seemed like a normal April day on all fronts.

That changed instantly. The library doors flew open and the entire faculty of Acalanes High School poured out, fresh from a meeting and chattering excitedly about something. The word spread quickly: Principal Schmidt had just announced that he would not be returning to Acalanes in September. The Governing Board had transferred him to head the district's Adult Education program.

Blueprint questions this decision. Transferring Schmidt in the first place makes little sense, and the place he is being sent only adds to the senselessness of the situation.

He has been near-universally praised by the teachers and students here at Acalanes for his skills as a manager, mediator, and pioneer. Indeed, the faculty took an impromptu poll at the meeting and found themselves unanimously opposed to the decision. In addition, he is a mere two years away from retirement.

We must also realize that Schmidt was principal at Del Oro for fourteen years before coming to Acalanes in 1994. Returning him there as the co-head of a subdivision of the school is not only a bizarre move, but an action that trips warning bells as well.

They have been sounding far and

wide. As the peculiarity of the District's decision becomes increasingly obvious, the cries of foul play are growing. Some point fingers at the vocal minority of parents who allegedly ousted Jim Changaris and Pat Smith from their coaching positions, while others accuse certain parents who are clamoring for more AP and Honors classes. Still others, including *Blueprint*, suspect that the District has ulterior motives in transferring Schmidt.

Blueprint now calls upon Dr. James Perino, Superintendent of the Acalanes Union High School District, to answer the questions the students, faculty, and community are asking:

-In your letter of April 28 to the faculty you state: "The staff, community, and students will be involved in the selection of the new principal...." This is confusing, as the faculty is unanimously opposed to the transfer and 600 students signed a petition asking that Schmidt stay. Why disregard their opinion by going through with the transfer?

-You speak of the adult education program needing a leader like Schmidt to grow under. Schmidt was principal of Del Oro for fourteen years and Acalanes, the flagship school, for six. Why move him into adult education when his experience is clearly with kids?

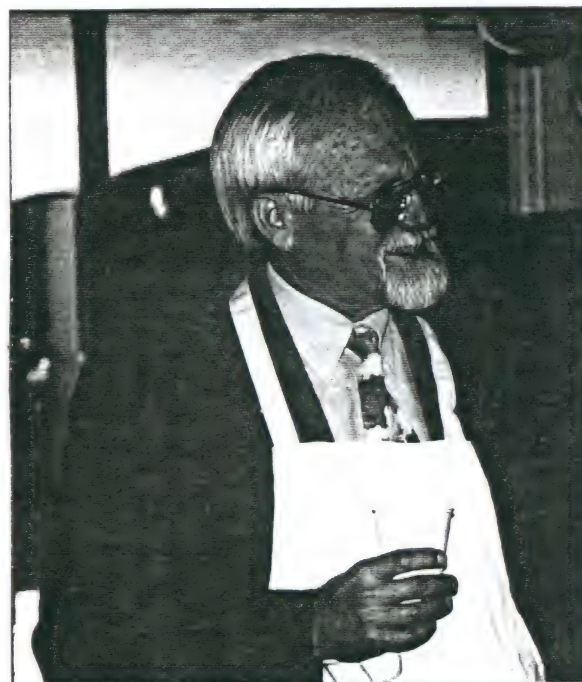
-With construction taking place, enrollment surging, and technology expanding, stability is of the utmost im-

portance. Why rock the boat by changing the school's leadership at this juncture?

-The position at adult education was created and then immediately filled without any public announcement. Why wasn't the job made open to application so a wide variety of people could seek it?

-What is the District's priority: student education or adult education? Will we devote our best people to a program that should be on the back burner both logistically and financially?

Perhaps when answers appear (assuming they exist) we can move on and bid our principal a fond adieu. But until then, the matter will remain unresolved.



Blueprint Photo/Thomas Kuo

Principal Keith Schmidt connects with the students at the Senior Breakfast on April, Wednesday 6.

Testing! Testing! A, B, C! (or is it D or E?)

By Peter Deng

Co-Editor-in-Chief

"That's an SAT word!" ejaculated the ebullient, bombastic boy, effusing with superfluous virility.

Yes, Acalanes! It's that time of year again! Spring has sprung! There is more pollen and less clothing—both can be very distracting, but try to stay focused because this is it. Get ready, 'cuz it's...

TEST TIME!

AP, SAT, SAT II, ACT—the list of acronyms goes on, but they all fall under three letters: ETS. And that's where the problem lies.

The Educational Testing Service, based in Princeton, New Jersey, is one of the worst "non-profit" organizations ever. It over-charges for inferior tests, inferior customer service, but superior money-making schemes.

Let's start with everyone's *favorite* test, the SAT. What exactly does it stand for? Well (eerily symbolic of the test itself), it stands for nothing. It was formerly known as the "Scholastic Achievement Test," but that was until someone in the company finally realized, "Hey! This test *doesn't* measure 'Scholastic Achievement'!" He couldn't be more correct.

"Scholastic Achievement" should consist *not only* of Math and Verbal sections, but also of a variety of subjects and curricula. Scholars are knowledgeable in many fields, such as science, music, foreign language, diplomatic relations, etc....

Then, to cover up the fiasco, ETS created SAT IIs to double the fun. You can test your English skills (again) in the writing test. You can test your math skills (again) in the math SAT II.

But no matter how hard ETS tries, its tests are still limiting. The ETS tests limit your mind and vast knowledge to literally five lines. There is no free thought. The SAT I contains only 6 question types. You never show your ability to put words into coherent sentences, only your ability to bubble in dots on a pre-printed page.

OK, young capitalists! Here is the best part! Learn from the pros about making the big bucks. Learn from ETS.

The New Jersey firm takes advantage of the insecure teenage mind by selling books, videos, past tests. How can a video entitled *Inside the SAT* help your score? It's quite simple; it's simply the sweepstakes mentality. "Maybe if I spend more money, the computer will add a few points to my score... I've got nothing to lose but a few but a few dollars." Then the trap gets deeper.

ETS is also profiting from restless teens. Two weeks before the test scores are mailed, ETS offers a service for fools. The "Scores by Phone" system allows anxious test-takers to receive their scores by phone, from home, for the small fee of \$10. Itching to know how you did? Come on! Just pay ten bucks to find out a score you can't change, but you never know, maybe the computer adds a few points when you pay (wink wink).

Just when you thought no more money could be embezzled, ETS can make money *months* after you take the test. For those anxious teens, ETS can quell your worries by generously offering the chance to make sure you've got the score you *deserve*. For only \$25, you can have a real live person score your test *by hand*! Wa! I don't believe!

ETS runs your life. Acalanes Assisted Poisoning classes build up to the AP tests in May. The Added Pressure keeps you up at night, doing homework and studying. Wow, what an impact the All-Powerful company can have on your life.

STOP—If you finish this section before time is called, and your "fun time" is reading the word "STOP" after your

Cor B? or A?
EENY MEENY MINY MO
Guess the answers I don't know
Hope my score is not too low
Eeny Meeny Miney Mo
My parents said to get into
the very best school so
this test determines
the rest of my entire
life.... or is it D?



daily practice SAT, you are seriously deranged. You probably own numerous SAT prep books, and you are probably the Customer of the Month of one of those "Testing Seminars Centers" for the third month in a row. You probably think that the letters "SAT" on your calendar stand for "Scholastic Achievement Test" instead of "Saturday." You find yourself defining every big word you hear.

DISTRICT INJUSTICE

By Charlie Massie
Staff Writer

The forced transfer of Principal Keith Schmidt from Acalanes High School has caused an uproar of discontent from students as well as the entire Acalanes faculty. This unwanted decision comes as the final straw in a long history of inefficient work and self-serving district administration.

In the past few years, the continuous, slow work carried out by the District Office has given students, parents, and faculty much anguish. One minor example is the computer scheduling problem that occurred at the beginning of the year. This huge glitch was due to the new computer scheduling program that was forced upon Acalanes High School by the District office.

Just last year, when one of Acalanes' best teachers, Rosemarie Bauer, suffered two terrible strokes, it came time for the District to shine

and help find a permanent substitute to take over for Bauer during her recovery. Yet with all its power and supposed significance, it took the District Office over one month to send the personnel files to Schmidt in order to facilitate the search for a permanent substitute. It did not take them a month to find the sub; it took them a month to send the personnel files 1000 feet to the Acalanes Main Office!

The District Office's detached approach to the Acalanes faculty is also demonstrated in its handling of the problems that resulted from too few classes for too many students. At the beginning of this year, teachers Marshall Pfeiffer, Lori Tewksbery, and Bauer were faced with an over-contract scheduling of students. Once the teachers realized they were over contract, they began the task of filing grievances. In the end, it took the district roughly four months to schedule the extra sec-

tions of biology and English, a problem that could have been alleviated with a few hours of diligent work.

These problems raise the looming question as to what is actually going on at the office. Just a few months ago, the District failed to pass a parcel tax, and it has yet to name a superintendent to replace Dr. James Perino, whose legacy at press time includes the forced transfer of Schmidt from Acalanes.

Even though the District conducted an extensive and expensive search with taxpayer dollars to find a replacement for District Superintendent James Perino, it decided against offering the job to any of the search's finalists and is now conducting another similar operation in hopes of finding an actual replacement. The troubling issue is that it had no luck with the first search, so how does it know that its next

Continued on page 18...

SENIOR EDITORIAL

The Irony of the Hyper-Joiners

By Nathalie de Leon
Staff Writer

At the beginning of my high school career, I began to strongly dislike everyone with a masterplan to get into college. They were armed with a convenient checklist of GPAs, SAT scores, honors classes, and extracurricular activities to get them into that Ivy, that lib-arts college, or that tech school.

I can't count how many times I've cringed during first semester of senior year when I was doing applications, and someone would rattle off the checklist and conclude that I was going to my prospective college. It would have been a nice compliment if the determining process wasn't so formulaic.

The list degraded every activity. It reduced Model UN to some conference you went to just to put it on the all-powerful, all-knowing transcript. Community service was a collection of hours to put on a piece of paper. Track was just another checkmark under sports.

I saw it as my crusade, preaching to underclassmen not to follow the path of the

hyper-joiners, not to do stuff just for paper. During my freshman and sophomore years, track or softball probably would have looked better than Sundays playing pool at the Makati Sports Club. A dozen positions in Leadership would have made me more appealing to the admissions boards rather than the hours I spent as a team-member on Model UN or Oral Interp. Maybe I could have put my efforts into SAT-prep classes rather than into practicing to be just above average at the flute. I spent all my time in journalism, even when I didn't get the position I wanted. But I liked it. I knew my editorship wouldn't look that impressive, but I didn't really care. The bottom line was that I did what I wanted to do. I even stuck with the things I wasn't very good at.

But it occurred to me that all of the people that I looked at with so much disdain were actually responsible for the existence of the activities that I loved so much. If it hadn't been for the dozens of people doing Speech and Debate or journalism or Model UN or Youth and Government just for col-

lege applications, those organizations wouldn't have even existed, or at the least they wouldn't have been so well-developed. Regardless of their motives, these people kept the programs running so that those who enjoyed them could participate. They facilitated the modicum of self-expression for those who could think for themselves.

And the community service was done. Whether or not some kid learned anything from collecting cans for a weekend doesn't matter. Whether or not it actually looks good on her transcript doesn't matter. The end result is that some man, who had gone without a meal for weeks, got a meal for once.

Ultimately, some people simply choose to cowtow to the admissions process. It's not exactly the enlightened path to intellectual and spiritual fulfillment, but at least it's a direction in life. As a result, those who do take the high road are propped up, and scores of community service projects that would not otherwise be done are finished. Perhaps it isn't as ignorable as I once thought.

CITIZEN SAM

The Double Blade of an Amoral Society

By Sam Cunningham
Opinion Editor

A new milestone for the cause of gay rights was reached last week in the state of Vermont. The legislature there approved "civil unions" for same-sex partners, essentially granting them all the benefits of marriage, minus the name itself.

Some, especially those on the social left wing, proclaim the decision to be the latest sign that America is becoming a more tolerant and more open society. They are correct: the complete acceptance of gays into society is coming. Just as open bigotry towards blacks faded with the World War II generation, homophobia will die out with the Baby Boomers.

So are we headed for a tolerant, open society? Yes and no. What we will see is a society not opposed to passing judgement on those who are different, but a society opposed to passing judgement *on anything at all*.

Think of it as nihilism made into a workable reality. Its development has paved the way for greater acceptance and equality in society, but at the same time, it has severely torn our social fabric. In Christianity, for example, women are no longer looked upon as inferior, but on the negative side, adultery has become socially acceptable. Hence, it is a

double-edged sword.

But how far will our moral indifference go? Take the massacre at Columbine High School last year. It was a horrifyingly barbaric spectacle on an unprecedented scale, but nothing was done about it. No serious gun control measures came out of the tragedy, and the stream of violent, decadent trash coming out of Hollywood wasn't stopped. Essentially, America refused to put its foot down and say "No more!" We as a country just shrugged our collective shoulders and changed the channel.

A similar example was America's reaction to the Clinton scandal of 1998. Our President had sex with a woman half his age, then lied to the Justice Department and the American people about it. Fifty, or even ten years ago, the American people would have forced him to resign in disgrace for such actions. In modern society, we looked the other way because of our booming economy.

A society that refuses to pass judgement is a society headed for trouble. Just as we will not condemn good, we may very well not condemn evil, should it arise. Should another Hitler or Stalin come to prominence, would our nihilistic culture tolerate him? In a world where there is no good and there is no evil, who will draw the line and

say we've gone too far?

What this evil may be is hard to be sure of, but we do know that we are entering the new century in a very tricky situation.

A moral void has formed around us, allowing greater acceptance of good as well as of evil. How to balance this double-edged blade will be perhaps the most paramount challenge we as a people will face in the coming years.

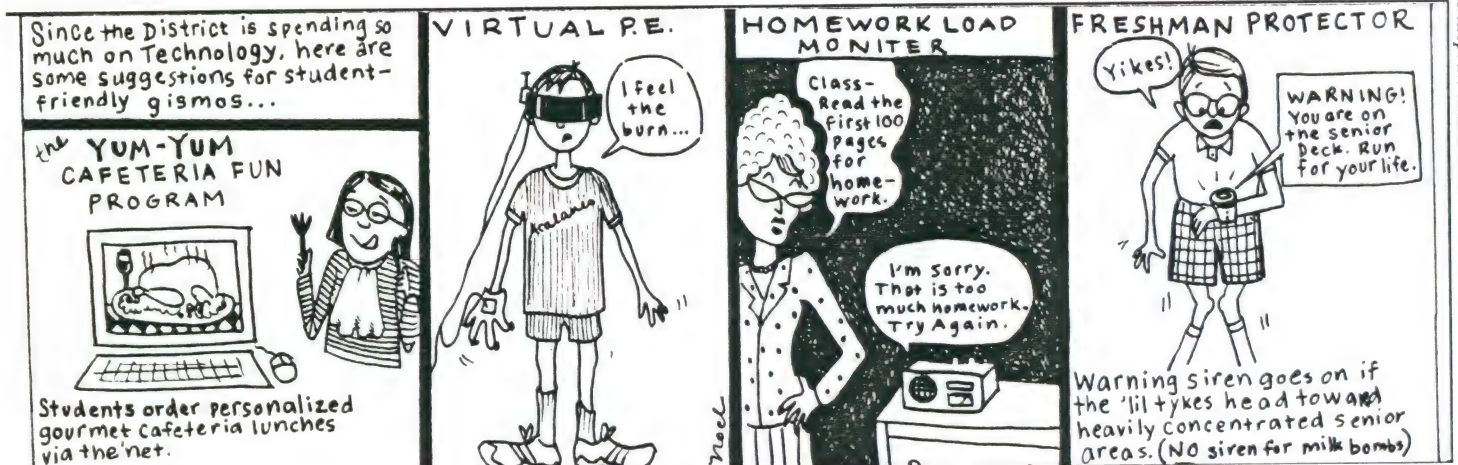
DISTRICT (CONTINUED)

...continued from pg. 17

search will yield more successful results.

Despite all of the problems and inefficiencies that have plagued the office, there is still the fact that the district oversees some of the finest public schools in the state. For this they should be commended, but the good feelings end there.

An individual can only hope that in the future, the District will be able to fix the daunting and perilous problem of chronic disarray and disconnected and often politically driven decisions, and move on in a more efficient and professional manner.



PRO/CON

Should I Stay Or Should I Go?-Elian

Hiro Kagiya*Business Editor*

INS troops storm your home bearing arms and ready to kill. They break through doors and yell at your family to tell them where you are. All of a sudden, armed men drag you from your protectors' loving arms and place you in a van, unsure of the future that lies ahead of you.

This is what Elian Gonzales had to go through in his vain attempt to stay in the United States. His mother wanted him to grow up in this country, where he could live free from the oppression, suppression and tyranny of the Cuban government.

On the Statue of Liberty it reads: "Bring me your poor, your hungry, your huddled masses yearning to be free." Currently, the sign on this immortal monument reads "No Vacancy" to Elian. However, to other political criminals pouring into this country, the sign reads, "If you have money and friends, citizenship is just a bribe away." It seems that the fact that the government is denying Elian citizenship is a prime example of the deplorable situation in this country today.

Given our nation's past, it is wrong to deny Elian the right to live here, as most of us are emigrants. Unless you are of Native American heritage, you have just as much a right to be here as Elian Gonzales has. It is morally bankrupt to deny the same advantages that you or your relatives received when they entered this country to any hard working foreigner who wishes to start a new life in America.

When you look at the situation from an objective point of view, you get lost in the laws and judicial torture that this poor boy has been forced to go through, not to mention the physical and mental stress he has had to overcome. Put yourself in his shoes and try to look at what he has had to go through in order to make it to his new life in the "Land of Opportunity." He has crossed an ocean on a raft and watched his mother die next to him, only to discover that he will be sent back to the oppressive government he tried so hard to get away from.

People try to make the argument that he should be with his father because it would be the best environment to grow up in, but the fact of the matter is that he went on camera and told his father that he wishes to stay in America with his loving and caring relatives. His relatives have aired their pleas to keep the boy with them in the United States, as well, and these pleas are sincere and their love for Elian is apparent. In this age of individualism, we constantly put self-elevation as the top priority in life. As long as this trend continues, fewer and fewer people will be allowed to share in the joy of being an American. Because of this shallow mindset, hundreds of thousands of Elians will be locked out by this gate formed by selfish Americans to protect their own interests.

By Damon Diederich*Co-Copy Editor*

The most recent media blitz to capture the attention of this nation's notoriously fickle reader/viewership has all the markings of a textbook media hit: adorable, innocent, wide-eyed six-year-old boy loses mother while fleeing Communist oppression; subsequently caught up in a huge international incident pitting his father and Cuba against his relatives and Cuban expatriates in the custody battle to end all custody battles. Human interest oozes off this story like crude from a beached tanker.

In the media circus, we seem to have lost sight of three very important things:

First, Elian is a little boy and not some piece of property to be fought over by nations as if some national treasure.

Second, Elian is an *illegal* immigrant and deserves the same treatment as all other illegal immigrants get.

Third, it is not the duty of nations to make decisions in custody battles. Elian is still his father's son and will remain so until the time the government of Cuba finds Juan unfit to be a father. The US cannot decide custody of Elian.

We tend to lose sight of the fact that Elian is just a boy and not something to fight over. All of the fuss is very disturbing and, as many child psychologists have noted, potentially damaging to the boy. It is very selfish of this nation and Elian's Miami relatives to endanger his mental well being for their own causes, political or otherwise.

We also seem to have forgotten that Elian is a...get this...illegal (Yes-illegal!) immigrant. We spend millions trying to prevent similarly cute Mexican children from ever setting foot on American soil, so why the heck should we make an exception for Elian? It may be true that he comes from the Cuba of Fidel Castro, resident bad boy of the Western Hemisphere (who we want to look like a petty tyrant), but he should not be afforded any privileges on the shallow, nationalistic political grounds that the U.S. wants to look like a better home for the boy than Cuba.

Lastly, Elian has a father who has not been proven unfit to care for his child. It is not the duty of nations to decide the custody of foreign children, nor their legal right. If the US decides to make Elian stay here, it would be a virtual custody decision granting custody to Elian's Miami relatives. The US does not have the right to take Elian away from his father.

In the wee hours of the morning of April 22, troopers from the INS stormed the home where Elian was being held in violation of orders by the Attorney General to turn him over to his father, weeks of legal deliberation unable to bring the relatives to turn over the boy. Elian was carried out of the home in the arms of a female agent and whisked away in a van. Elian was ecstatic to see his father. Pictures released after the reunion show a joyful Elian with his smiling dad. Although critics said Elian was drugged, the smile on that little boy's face was genuine. Elian's father had promised to buy his son a hot dog and scrambled eggs when he saw him again. Now he has had a chance to keep that promise and that is as it should be.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Saving The Student Store

Dear Editor:

Were you aware that the current stated position of The Acalanes Parents Club would severely reduce the amount of funds raised in the future to support academic equipment and programs?

As a financial professional, father of two Acalanes High School alumni, and husband of the manager of The Dons' Store, I have assisted in maintaining the financial records of the store since August, 1995. I believe that the students, as the beneficiaries of Dons' Store fund raising, and parents, as the ones responsible for the election of their leadership, need to be aware of the facts.

Prior to 1995, The Dons' Store was a small operation, which provided limited services and products typically resulting in annual profits of several thousand dollars. Since my wife began managing the store in August, 1995, gross sales have grown from about \$30,000 per year, and are rapidly approaching \$90,000. The store's cash position has increased from about \$9,700 at August 31, 1995, to nearly \$60,000 at this writing (including money reserved as follows). According to the 3-31-00 Parents Club Operating statement, "\$30,000 of these funds have been set aside to purchase 32 new computers." It should be noted that this cash increase has occurred "net" of all operating costs, including the stipend paid to the store manager. Without haggling over the "bottom-line profit" numbers (as opposed simply to its cash position), *the Dons' Store is hardly "a minimal Parents Club fund-raiser"* (as it was referred to in the Parents Club Newsletter). When the PC operating statement budget is *correctly* analyzed, the store is probably the second largest cash contributor among all of the PC's fund-raising activities.

These economic issues have a direct impact on your school and what additional benefits can be provided to further your education and experience here.

Perhaps more disturbing to me than the misinformation previously cited is information communicated by PC leadership in a recent reference to The Dons' Store: "*Any revenues above operating expenses will be channeled through Parents Club to be distributed for the benefit of all students.*" This is good, and in fact, one of the *original purposes* of the store. **Now the bad news!** With respect to the foregoing, the communication continued: "*...it is not our intention for the store to be a big fund-raiser for the Parents Club.*" And further, "*If it is turns out that profits far exceed covering operating expenses, the scale of the store's operations will need to be reduced.*"

This represents a major departure from the store's historical reason for existence, and from the direction initiated by previous PC Boards and District leadership. It means that you will be able to buy new computers from the store's previous profits, but does not address how they expect to fund the on-going upgrading which will be required to keep you technologically competitive! You will each have to determine if changing the entire nature of the store is in your best interest.

In closing, consider the following: 1) The store provides broad services for students, parents, athletes, and faculty; 2) The prices for general merchandise are generally competitive with local area stores; 3) The "school spirit items" are simply not available anywhere else, yet only "normal markups" are added; 4) The store serves as a real world opportunity for entrepreneurship students to learn how a real business runs; 5) *If the store is not allowed to make a normal profit on goods*

sold, the school and its students will be harmed through a loss of additional funding for the extras our taxes do not seem to provide.

If you enjoy the convenience of The Dons' Store and are concerned about one more decision which will reduce funding to make your education "the best that it can be," I would urge you to work productively as a group to protect your interests.

Sincerely,
R. W. Minson, II

RESPONSES

Dear Editor:

Thank you for asking me to respond to Mr. Minson's letter. The Parents Club and the district are in a partnership with the Dons' Store. The store manager is a paid district employee, and the Parents Club pays a \$6,000 annual stipend for duties above and beyond the district job description, such as setting up and working Dons' Days.

One of the goals of the Parents Club this year has been to clarify both the function and financial reporting methods of the store. In doing so, we have found that many of the items that Mr. Minson addresses in his letter are district issues, or can only be decided in working with the district.

We are very pleased with the store and thank store manager, Bev Minson, for making the store a convenience and a service to our students and faculty, as well as a place for our parents to volunteer.

Students who have further questions should direct them to Principal Keith Schmidt or Dr. Beverly Sadler at the district office.

Sincerely,
Hilma Jones

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editors,

Recently there has been speculation as to whether or not there will be a Dons' Store for our students and if there will be a manager.

My name is David Gallo and I am a senior at Acalanes. I have had the privilege of knowing Mrs. Minson and counting her as a friend. My junior year I volunteered about 30 hours in the Dons' Store. I was even introduced to my girlfriend while working in the Dons' Store.

I worked for community service hours by stocking workbooks, folding uniforms, replenishing candy supplies, running the cash register, shopping for school supplies and candy at Sam's, as well as working Dons' Days in the Student Store. During this time Mrs. Minson worked at least 12 hours on the day I was there to work, even though she was not paid for remotely near this amount of time. She puts more time in than she receives in payment for; she does more jobs than she is given credit for.

Without Mrs. Minson, I don't see how the letter jackets will be able to be ordered, let alone embroidered; I don't see how volunteers will spend the time to restock candy; volunteers will not want to stay 5 hours longer to make sure the Z tape is correct; I don't know who will give community service hours to the students in need, who will spend their Saturdays organizing the store, nor will you find a better manager for business students.

If I had one thing to change in my high school career, I would have taken the Entrepreneurship Class in order to have the opportunity to learn more of what she has to offer. I currently work at Claremont Country Club, in the tennis pro shop. I fold clothes, sell tennis supplies, run the register, and converse with the customers. I make \$12 an hour, for doing the same work I was taught in the Dons' Store and I owe my job and the large amount of money I make, largely to Mrs. Minson. I believe it would be serious mistake to lose Mrs. Minson and I would strongly recommend taking a good long look at what she does before taking any action.

Sincerely,
Devin John Gallo
Class of 2000

The Cuban Situation

Dear Editors,

My main purpose is to educate people on the other side because it seems that most Americans are so one-sided on the issue. What most Americans see is the reuniting of a father and a son, yet they don't seem to understand what the results of that reunion are going to be. Everyone sees the small picture because in this country, we are a democracy. In our minds we think a father and son should be united, but there is another side to this case. This side has not been reported by the media because some journalists are very biased, and others play it in a fair light. My family arrived from Cuba when my mother was 13, her mother 2 years later, and her father 4 years after her mother. My family members in Florida were protestors outside Elian's house. What I want to share is my point of view, and I want to educate people about what goes on in Cuba. For whatever reason, they are not getting that side of it from our media or our government.

Castro is the father; there are no parent's or human rights, just as Castro's own daughter has said. She is also a defector. Castro runs everything, he controls everything, and people in this country need to understand that. Americans do not know about what really goes on inside Cuba. Placing Elian in his father's hand is basically giving him a death sentence, and he will have no relationship with his father. First he will be impounded in a reeducation compound, which should make Americans wonder why he needs to be reeducated after only five months. They will reprogram him because they view him as a threat to the Communist regime. This is only the first step in a process that most of my Cuban-American family and I believe will lead to his eventual execution. By that time though, most Americans will have forgotten about Elian, and no one will care. So what happens in Cuba? When he is seven, he will be cut off from his milk and meat rations. He will also work in a factory and go to school. At 11, he will be sent to boarding school and possi-

bly to the sugar fields. When he is 13, he will be enlisted in the Communist army. Most Americans want to believe that Elian being reunited with his dad is a grand thing, but it is not, because he will not have a life with his father. He will always be seen as a threat to the Communist regime because he has ties to America, and he will eventually be executed. Castro will use this boy for political reasons and make him an icon, but my family was protecting him because they know his life back in Cuba will end in death.

A dictator of a totalitarian state has no conscience, and anyone who opposes him is executed or imprisoned. It sickens me that people have been so intent on having Elian reunited with his father, when it's the worst thing for the boy overall. As long as the Miami relatives had him, then the father would be safe, and the family in Cuba would be safe. But now he has the boy, and somebody is going to end up dead. My Cuban family and I can't understand why it is that our government has not taken care of the situation in Cuba. Why, when the Soviet Union fell, was Cuba not taken care of?

If Elian had been sent back immediately, no one would have been the wiser. He wouldn't have been seen as a threat to Cuba and it wouldn't have been a big deal. I feel for him; his mother died getting him to this country. He is a miracle as far as most Cubans are concerned. He had 12 dolphins surrounding him for three days, protecting him from sharks. The other two people who were rescued were sunburned and blistered, but Elian had no marks on him after three days.

Cubans have always been pacifists. They are not a violent people. The vandalism and violent protests which went on were just punks taking advantage of the situation. Those weren't Cubans, but the media concentrated on it.

Sincerely,
Lyenne Denny

ACALANES BLUEPRINT ENTERTAINMENT

INSIDE



Movie Review
Pg. 23

Blueprint

May 5, 2000

Page 22

OUTLET VISION AWARDS

Audience Deems Ceremony A Success

By Kristy Mayer
Co-Copy Editor

Technical difficulties reigned at the Outlet Vision Awards on Wednesday, April 26, but despite the many sound, lighting, and organizational catastrophes, the multitude of students that filled the Hoffman Theater at the Dean Leshner Regional Center judged it a success.

The organizational breakdown began when the master of ceremonies, Nigel Cunningham, was interrupted by the sound crew while introducing the photography contestants. Jamie Donohoe, student director of Outlet and the show's host, then ushered the confused Acalanes senior Grace Woods onto the stage. Woods' performance was the first of four monologues, but was originally scheduled as the second to last event of the show.

"I think I did well...but when they brought me on stage, I had no idea what I was supposed to be doing," said Woods.

The multitude of drama, vocal, and dance performances was followed by an obligatory promotion for the show's sponsor, the Academy of Art College. The rather dull advertisement made the audience impatient for the main event: the band contest.

The viewers were disappointed by the first band, Ten Fold, from Miramonte, which could not complete the set without an awkward sound check.

The central part of the show, namely the awards, finally reared its head at the conclusion of Ten Fold's appearance. The award for theater was given to Ben Graney of Las Lomas, while the film award was given to Adad Warda of Campolindo. The presentation was interrupted by an angry presenter who complained that the show was random and chaotic.

The unexpected outburst was fol-

Chief, senior Elizabeth Geier, presented the writing award to Nina LaCour from Campo, Acalanes band, Milako Plus, took the stage. Their performance, which was mellower and more audible than the first two, received a standing ovation from the audience, and earned them the award for best music group.

"Winning the award was amazing. I'm very honored and flattered that I could be here," said junior Dan Wright, lead singer of Milako Plus.

The remaining awards were announced in laundry-list fashion, due to the limited amount of time left for the show. Awards were given to Laura Markley of Miramonte for photography, Melissa Castellano of Acalanes for visual arts, Geoff Countryman of Campolindo for instrumental music, Tracy MacDowell of Miramonte for vocal music, and Renee Deweese of Campolindo for dance.

In spite of the numerous technical and organizational difficul-

ties the show experienced, the audience loved the performances.

"The show was great. There were a few unfortunate circumstances, but the arts came through. In fact, I think that if the show had gone really smoothly, it would have been a monotonous award show, but instead we got a little variety," said Acalanes sophomore Boris Kogan.



The band Milako Plus jams at the Outlet Vision Awards. The performance was spectacular, despite technical difficulties.

Blueprint Photo: Sophia Maund

lowed by the second band of the evening, the Last Temptation of Icarus, from Campolindo. Before the band could begin, Donohoe returned to the stage to calm the band and audience at the request of theater officials. Last Temptation turned the amplifiers down and gave an average performance.

After Acalanes' Outlet Bureau

MOVIE REVIEWS

Submarine Flick Is Sub-par

By Elisabeth Geier

Staff Writer

U-571 (Matthew McConaughey) PG-13

It seems that *U-571* director and co-screenwriter Jonathan Mostow has seen *Das Boot* a few too many times for his own good. His latest film recalls the famous German WWII submarine film in countless instances, and ordinarily such an exacting homage would warrant claims of duplicity. However, many of the similarities between *Das Boot* and *U-571* are due not simply to Mostow's apparent regard for the earlier film, but to the standard formula of war films in general, particularly submarine war films. In one of *U-571*'s earliest scenes, a crewmember of the American sub says of his ship, "She's old, but she'll hold." The same adage applies to the formulaic nature of war films. Occasionally the plot wears thin and the characters run into each other in a mess of over-familiar clichés, but the classic themes of heroism and patriotism never fail to stimulate the audience.

U-571 follows a crew of young American submariners led by Lt. Andrew Tyler (Matthew McConaughey, everybody's favorite naked, bongo-playing stoner) in their attempt to capture the Nazi Enigma coding device, which would allow Allied forces to prevent Germany from destroying Allied shipping. The plan is to rendezvous with a stranded German U-boat, overtake the crew, snag the coding device, and hightail it home. Naturally, as is necessary to set the stage for a good war picture, the crew's mission goes awry and the film depicts their numerous trials and tribulations while trapped beneath the surface of the sea in an enemy craft. The men aboard *U-571* are faced with difficulties typical of any Hollywood military crew: the sub is taken down to a dangerous depth, mutinies spring up, hatches leak, the only remaining torpedo is stuck in an inoperative tube, boys become men, and men become heroes in the face of danger. Even the acting is old hat in *U-571*, and while McConaughey does an admirable job in an uninspiring role, and the rest of the crew manages adequately with what they are given, there are no

stand-out roles or performances worth commenting on. The real star is the special effects, which did an excellent job of portraying battles to the death under the depths of the icy sea. The special effects crew of *U-571* did an incredible job digitally simulating realistic battles and underwater explosions.

Despite its spectacular special effects, there simply is nothing new in *U-571*, and such a typical plot grows weary after a while. Remarkably, the things that save this film from being a waste of time and money are the very things which make it typical. Yes, the plot is overly familiar. Of course the characters are one-dimensional stereotypes, and their experiences on the submarine are no different than in any military drama. But these clichés are exactly what one expects from a war film, and what make *U-571* work. When the music swells, the captain gives his crew an inspira-



Courtesy Photo

A World War II American submarine crew, played by (clockwise from top) Matthew McConaughey, T.C. Carson, and Will Estes, set out on a daring mission to capture a top secret coding device.

tional speech, and the Americans overcome a challenge presented by the evil enemy, the audience gets excited even though it's the same thing they've seen time and again. While I personally prefer more original fare, such as last year's incredible *Three Kings*, there is no denying the staying power of a good old-fashioned military adventure, and in that sense, *U-571* succeeds in its mission.

Grade: C+

Blueprint's Recommended War Films

The military film genre is huge, encompassing psychological thrillers, satire, combat action/adventure, character study and even slapstick comedy. *Blueprint* would like to make these suggestions for a variety of war films that everybody ought to be familiar with. All titles are available on video.

All Quiet on the Western Front (1930. Starring Lew Ayres) NR
Dr. Strangelove (1964. Dir. Stanley Kubrick) NR
Patton (1970. Starring George C. Scott) PG
The Deer Hunter (1978. Starring Robert DeNiro) R
Apocalypse Now (1979. Dir. Francis Ford Coppola) R
Stripes (1981. Starring Bill Murray) R
Das Boot (1982. Dir. by Wolfgang Petersen) R
Full Metal Jacket (1987. Dir. Stanley Kubrick) R
Glory (1989. Starring Denzel Washington) R
In the Army Now (1994. Starring Pauly Shore) PG
Saving Private Ryan (1998. Dir. by Steven Spielberg) R
Three Kings (1999. Dir. David O. Russell) R

MUSIC

Dr. Dre's Back in Green

By Nick Allen
Feature Editor

Dr. Dre-2001

When the hip-hop phenomenon first caught on in the early '80s, the critics said it was a passing fad that would die in the next few years. It's twenty years later, and hip-hop lives on. Only now, the original participants of the scene are called veterans, and among these veterans, Dre is king. From his early years with gangsta-rap group N.W.A., to his celebrated solo album *The Chronic*, to his work as a producer with Eminem, Dr. Dre has repeatedly revolutionized the music we call hip-hop, and now he has a new album. *2001*, Dre's first album in eight years, confirms that the man hasn't lost his edge in his old age, and that he isn't afraid to push a few buttons. The new album comes out blazing (no pun intended) with the same rawness that made *The Chronic* the gangsta-rap bible, and touches on the same material (pot, sex, guns, pot) that defines the style of music Dre was largely responsi-

ble for creating. Unknown by many hip-hop newbies, Dr. Dre is not known for his verbal skills, and most of the rapping on *2001* is done by guests Eminem, Snoop Dogg, Hittman, Xzibit, and Kurupt. Dre shines in his production skills, which are excellent, to say the least. Nearly half of the tunes on *2001* are already hits, which is not to say that the other tracks aren't equally good, but the big guys at MTV aren't about to play a song called "Let's Get High." Fans may have been hoping for a more radical departure from *The Chronic*, but then again, some old dogs don't need to learn new tricks.

Slipknot-Self Titled Album

This is brutal, but nowadays it isn't enough for a metal band to just be brutal. You need a hook. Slipknot, the eight man (you heard me, eight man) metal orchestra, is a head above all of the other metal bands because they have avoided the typical metal clichés in favor of a more experimental approach to their music. The

most distinctive aspect of the Slipknot sound is the density of their music.....but how could it not be dense with eight people? For example, while listening to Slipknot, you can hear three different drummers, turntable scratches, samples, and keyboards, alongside the typical guitar and vocals, all bursting out of your speakers at the same time. Interestingly enough, Slipknot has been compared to the more commercially successful band Korn. However, the only real similarity between the two groups is lyrical content (you know the type: "I'm so messed up, I'm so pissed off," etc...). Originality aside, Slipknot's real strength is its energy, which is what metal is all about. The hand drumming throughout the tracks gives the album a cool, tribal feel, and the warped samples blend in nicely with the distorted wall of sound. Check out "Spit it Out," "Wait and Bleed," and "Eyeless" to really appreciate the musical force that is Slipknot.

CLASSES: A SATIRE

Tips From a Graduating Senior

By Heather Klurfeld
Staff Writer

As a graduating Senior, I felt that it would be valuable to the rest of the student body if I shared the pearls of wisdom that I have attained through my four years at Acalanes. The following is a list of classes that will help you achieve your full potential at Acalanes:

Parking 101: This class doesn't exist. There is no parking. In a creative attempt to earn credit, some students invent their own parking places. Churches, bus lanes, and copied parking passes are ways to dupe the administration into thinking that your car is legitimately parked. Those who make wise decisions pass; those with poor judgement (parking in a red zone, etc...) fail the course and are fined heavily.

Basic Education 204: Acalanes is always "open for education." This spirited

class usually occurs on Friday nights in the McDonald's parking lot. Although 90 percent of the student body is in this course, the most popular participants are Jose C., Jack D., and Mickey.

Health 316: Maintaining a healthy, balanced diet is important. This course will teach you the food pyramid of Acalanes, which consists of zombies for breakfast, a french-fry-pizza-and-Coke combo for lunch, and popcorn as a snack. And, like a good friend, always remember to share your milk with freshmen.

Fashion 220: While this course will teach you what's in vogue in the fashion world, there is no need to take it. Don't open up the J.Crew catalog. Cancel that trip to the Bebe fashion show. Simply glance at your peers as they saunter through the halls, and all of the newest items are on display.

Decorating 525: Vases are in. I suggest you give them out at your next par-

ty. They also double as highballer shot glasses.

AP Classes 1-1000: There are so many of these courses to choose from. They come in all different subjects from AP Breathing to AP Shoe-Tying. Signing up for at least two hundred of these classes, as well as maintaining an 7.0 GPA, are the minimum requirements for most colleges.

Sportsmanship 447: According to the *Contra Costa Times*, no one at Acalanes has passed this course. Apparently we are too obnoxious and rude to be called "good sportsmen." Apparently, having a cult called the Sixth Man Club or throwing bricks in locker room windows constitutes good sportsmanship. Silly me.

Whatever classes you choose to take, I wish you luck. As for me, I've fulfilled my course requirements and am going to the big leagues, such as Greek Systems 250 (go wahoos).

FILM FESTIVAL

Acalanes Directors Get Thumbs Up Reviews

New Talent Discovered Through First Film Festival

By Lexi Matsui
Co-Editor-in-Chief

Leadership was looking for a few artists to add to the long list of Acalanes all-stars this year, and the search ended with the first Acalanes film festival, held on Thursday, April 13.

The festival consisted of eight films, all produced, directed, and starred in by Acalanes students, or friends from other schools.

The judges were seniors James Applebury, Corrine Coates, and Grace Woods.

"This year leadership wanted more activities that didn't have to do with sports," said Woods.

Applebury said that leadership had heard about "successful film festivals at other schools at a leadership conference."

"We based the judging on professionalism, originality, plot, story, and creativity," said Woods.

"I was pleasantly surprised," said Applebury, who didn't know what to expect when the screenings began.

Contest participant, sophomore Sander Lewis, won the first place prize of a \$50 gift certificate to the Warehouse. Lewis has been making films since he was about eleven or twelve years old.

"My uncle teaches film, so he got me into it when I was pretty young," he said.

Lewis added that he chose his film among the nine or ten that he's

made because it was "nice and short, and I felt that an audience could really understand this one."

Lewis used super eight millimeter film to tape his entry. "I developed it myself, and we were really happy with the exposure," he said.

Second place went to *Inside Peaches*, a copy of *The Blair Witch Project*, by sophomore Josh Rosenberg. This claymation piece featuring a character named Peaches, follows the character as he goes about his day.

"My friend and I went to an art supply store to get the stuff to build the set," said Rosenberg. They then filmed it using stop/start action with a digital camera, and edited it with editing software.

"It took about two hours to film two seconds," said Rosenberg.

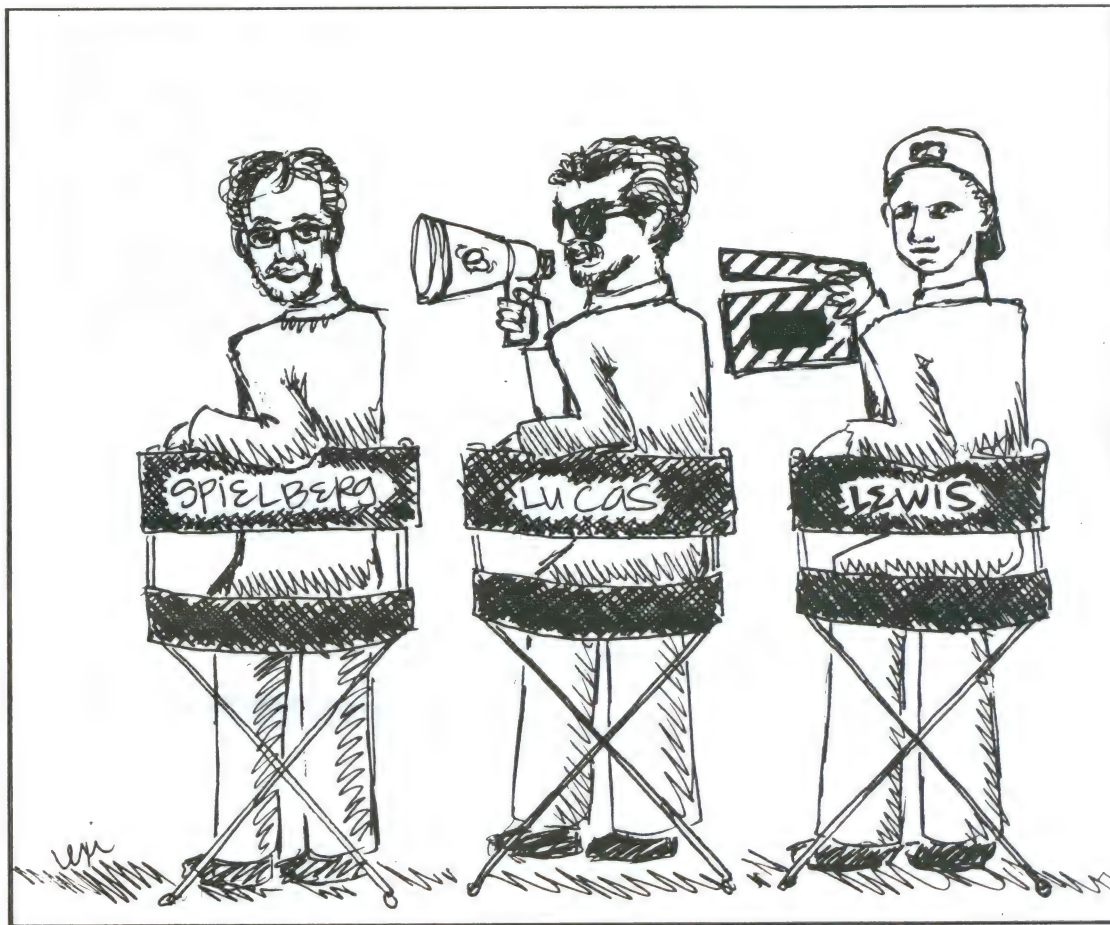
This is the first time Rosenberg has entered any of his films in a contest, although he's made about ten in the past.

The third place prize, a \$5 gift certificate to Hollywood Video went to freshman Ben Harris for his documentary entitled "Plates: Our misunderstood friends."

"I was standing in (my friend) Gene's dining room. He has a bunch of nice, big plates," said Harris, explaining his inspiration. Harris has only been making films for about a year, but has been acting for a long time.

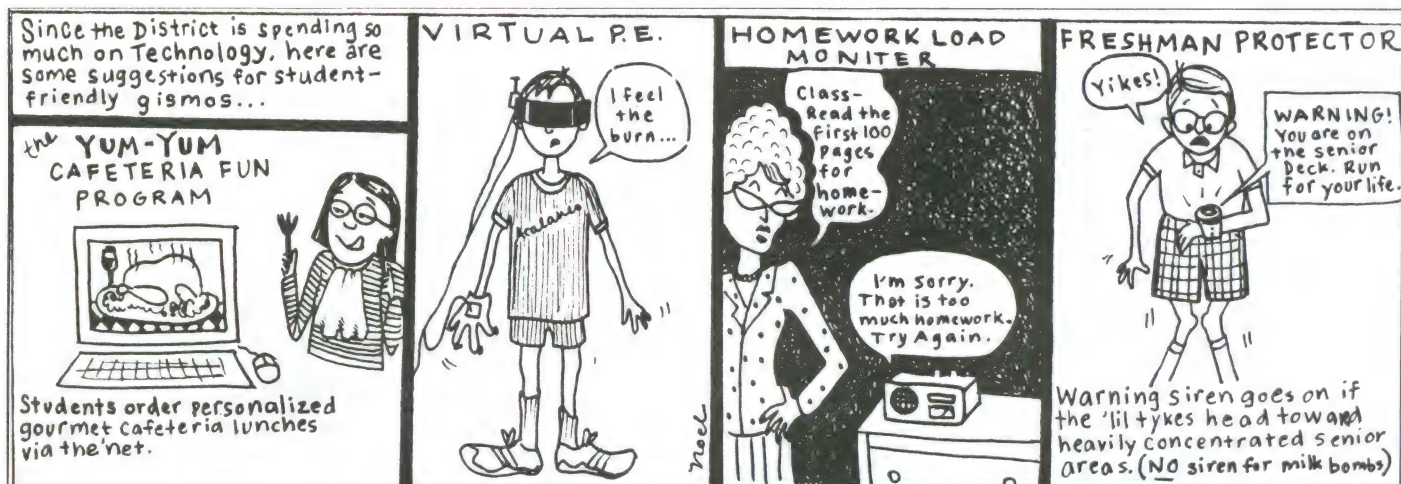
Overall, leadership feels that the film festival was a success, and hopes to continue it in the future.

"We were very happy with the results," said Applebury.

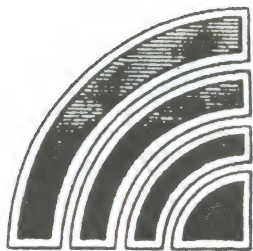


Blueprint Illustration/Lexi Matsui

NOEL'S PAGE



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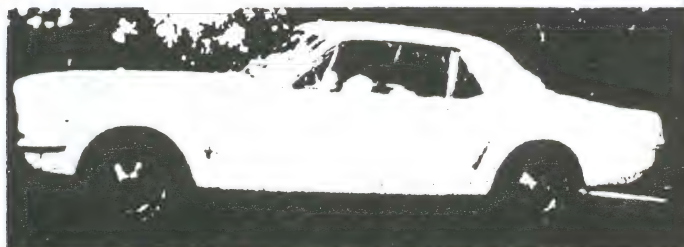


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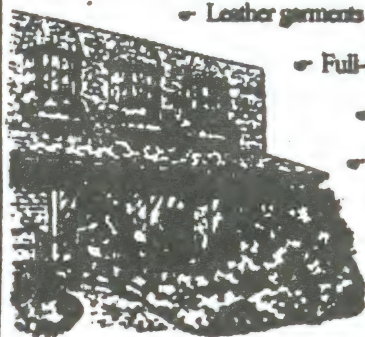
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A CALANES BLUEPRINT SPORTS

INSIDE



Track Pg. 28

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May 5, 2000

Page 27

BOYS' VOLLEYBALL

Blueprint Photo/Thomas Kuo

**Boys' volleyball
Up In Arms**

TRACK

Coach Leaves 50-Year Legacy Behind

By Keenan Ng
Staff Writer

The retirement of Coach Robert Warren marks the end of an era spanning nearly 50 years of coaching and teaching at Acalanes.

After this season, Warren will officially retire from coaching track at Acalanes and move to El Dorado, California, where he will enjoy his retirement. Warren has been at Acalanes for 47 years, as a student, a teacher, and a coach.

To many, including track and cross country head coach Manny Myers, Warren was more than just a coach and a peer, he was a friend.

"He's going to be sorely missed. No one will ever fill his void," said Myers, holding back emotions.

After teaching at Acalanes for 36 years, Warren decided five years ago, to retire from the profession of teaching.

"I had a general secondary credential which principals liked because, technically, you can teach anything at the high school level. I taught keyboarding, science, math, driver's education, economics, money management, P.E., and law," said Warren.

Aside from being a great teacher, Warren coached the track team and was highly respected by his peers. Long distance coach and history teacher, Ramsey Thomas, is especially respectful of Warren's accomplishments.

"50 years. Do you devote 50 years of your life to anything? I mean, none of us do that. Most of us aren't married for 50 years. First he's an athlete here, then he's a coach forever. That is a very rare thing. We're very lucky to have him for that long. The school is lucky to have had him for that long," said Thomas.

Warren has thoroughly enjoyed his time at Acalanes and feels the best part of his experience at the school has been working with the kids.

"Being my last year, I've really enjoyed being associated with the high school and the kids. It's a real nice group of kids to work with. I think the thing I

liked best about it is (that) you could talk to the kids like adults," said Warren.

As for the track team itself, Friday, April 28, was probably the busiest day of the season. Playing host to 18 teams at the Charlie Eaton/Robert Warren Relays is no easy task. Starting at 11 a.m. and ending around 10 p.m., the meet hosted some of the best athletes in the Bay Area.

Overall, Acalanes did well. The boys performed incredibly, taking second place with 50 points, losing only to California High School.

In terms of track events, the shining star for Acalanes was the boys' four-mile relay that took second place in 19:29.8. This team included junior Steve Vetek, seniors Vijay Sekhon and Joerg Muhr, and freshman Alex Shogan.

The Acalanes field events helped carry the Dons to their second place title. In the high jump, senior David Woodworth leapt to a height of 5' 10", and junior Peter Lennon followed suit with a jump of 5' 10", taking second and third place, respectively.

In pole vault, senior Matt Meyer vaulted 12' 6" for third place along with Lennon, who vaulted 12' 0" for fifth.

The girls also performed well, finishing fourth place overall with 48 points.

Notable events included the 100m



Junior Peter Lennon finishes the varsity boys hurdles heat with determination at the annual Bob Warren Relays on Friday, April 28. Acalanes placed second out of the 50 teams that participated in the invitational.

hurdles in which juniors Marimikel Charrier (16.7 seconds) and Jessie Plauche (17.2 seconds) took second and third place, respectively.

In the field events, senior Kristen Green performed up to par, finishing second in the long jump (16' 1") and second in the triple jump (34' 8"). She was accompanied by junior Samantha Skarl, who took fourth in discus with a throw of 93' 8".

BOYS' VOLLEYBALL

Varsity Sets Up High Hopes for TCAL

By Jenny Jun
Co-Copy Editor

The hunger for victory seemed endless as the Dons powered through an easy win against Freedom, improving their league record to 10-2, and keeping their nine-game-winning streak alive.

Acalanes gave Freedom a beating on Friday, April 28, in a quick match of 15-2, 15-1, and 15-9. Senior Darryl Wong contributed seven kills and senior Mason Wodhams added three aces. The Dons also smothered Benicia on Wednesday, April 26, with scores of 15-0, 15-6, and 15-1. The Panthers were no match for the Dons as Wodhams had seven consecutive service points in the first game. Due to some technical difficulties, the Benicia gym lights went out in the middle of the second game. When the lights came back on, Acalanes was rejuvenated and hammered kills at Benicia to win 15-6. Junior John Wurzel added two aces in the third game.

The Dons took an impressive second place out of 20 teams in their own tournament on Saturday, April 29, losing only to Deer Valley. They also placed fifth out of 28 teams in the Fremont-Sunnyvale tournament that took place on Saturday, April 22.

With a full, home-court crowd, the Dons upset Miramonte on Friday, April 21, in an all-out fight to the finish. The Mats took a 7-4 lead in the first game, but the Dons were able to tie the score at 7-7 with precise passes by junior Bill Kallio and senior Austin Feren. A huge block by junior Josh Edlinger made the score 14-12 and helped the Dons take the first game. "Acalanes played extremely well. They pounded the ball and exploited the weaknesses in our blocking, and had a lot more enthusiasm coming into the match," said Miramonte player Reed Gallogly.

The Mats started strong in the second game with a 3-0 lead due to Dons hitting

errors. However, the Dons tied the score at 6-6 by working off Miramonte blockers. When Acalanes had a kill, Miramonte would answer back with a kill of its own. The score remained tied until 13-13. Miramonte looked ready to take the game at 14-13, but Acalanes turned the tables and won 17-15.

By game three, Acalanes had a lead of 5-2, but impressive digging by the Mats gave them an edge at 9-5. At 12-6, the Dons took a frustrating time-out which proved inef-

by Miramonte blockers, making the score 9-2 with the Mats leading. The Dons were able to catch up to 9-9 because of their opponent's miscommunication, but the Mats pummeled through for a 15-9 victory.

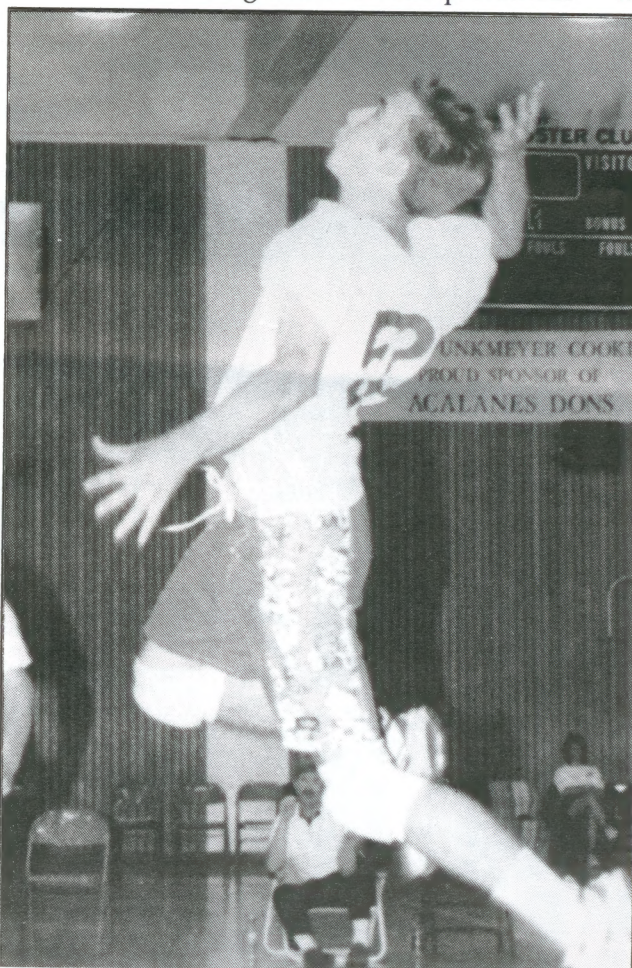
In an intense fifth game to decide the winners, the Dons rocketed to a 4-1 lead. Miramonte soon had control 6-4, when Acalanes was called for lifts. Edlinger's block landed straight down to tie the score 7-7. Sophomore Mike McNeil added a kill, which gave Acalanes the edge, 11-7. Another impressive block by Edlinger gave the Dons match point, 14-7. Acalanes ended the match in glory with a score of 15-9.

"We finally picked it up and came together as a team...and Eric Lee's setting was money," said Edlinger. Lee had a career high of 64 assists, while Kallio racked up 24 kills and Edlinger tallied 18 kills and 16 blocks.

Seeking revenge for an earlier loss against Campo, Acalanes prevailed on April 19; 9-15, 13-15, 15-8, 15-7, 15-10. Consistent hitting by McNeil did not match up to Campo's strong jump serves that wiped the Dons off the court in game one. Passing problems also plagued the Dons in the next game as the Cougars took a 5-2 lead. Two service aces by Kallio tied the score at 6-6, but the Cougars took an 11-9 lead, forcing the Dons to take a time-out. Tough serving by Kallio and a deep corner kill by Wodhams boosted the Dons to 13-13. Acalanes was called for a lift at game point, and Campo took the second game win.

The Dons' accurate passing gave them a 7-4 lead and subdued the Cougars in the third game. McNeil added two kills, making the score 11-7. Aggressive Acalanes blocking rewarded the Dons with game point, 14-8. Senior Dan Speir closed the game with an ace. Acalanes took

control and never looked back while Campo was having hitting trouble. The Dons took two easy wins of 15-7 and 15-10 to seal the match. McNeil was the match leader with 22 kills, while Lee contributed 58 assists.



Junior Bill Kallio leaps effortlessly into the air with precise timing to spike the ball down to the feet of his opponents. Acalanes finished second in the tournament on April 29, losing only Deer Valley.

fective, as Acalanes continued hitting into the net. Feren's strong serving helped the Dons reach 9, but Miramonte took the game, with a final score of 15-11. After a third game win, the Mats convincingly took a fourth game lead 6-2. Edlinger was rejected twice

Blueprint Photo/Will McCosker

GOLF

Dons Revisit Chance for NorCal Berth

By Myles Rush

Sports Editor

Last year's golf team was exalted as the best team in Coach Tim Scott's 11 year tenure, but can you believe that they are even better this year?

Last year, the Dons climbed to a successful plateau which had never been reached in previous years. The team earned the league title with a 12-1 season, breaking through the barrier of expectation which was placed before them. In the North Coast Section Finals (NCS), the Dons' glimpse of daylight into the Northern California Golf Tournament (NorCal) was eclipsed by Arcata. The top three finishers in the NCS tournament went on to NorCal. However, the Dons went home with their prolific season in hand, and their NorCal berth lost.

Here we are, a year later, and the Dons are on their way to a first place league finish, 15-1, and another go at the elusive NorCal tournament. The only difference between this year and last is that the Dons are even more magnificent than ever.

"This is my fourteenth year coaching...and this is the best group of golfers – the best team I've ever had," said Scott.

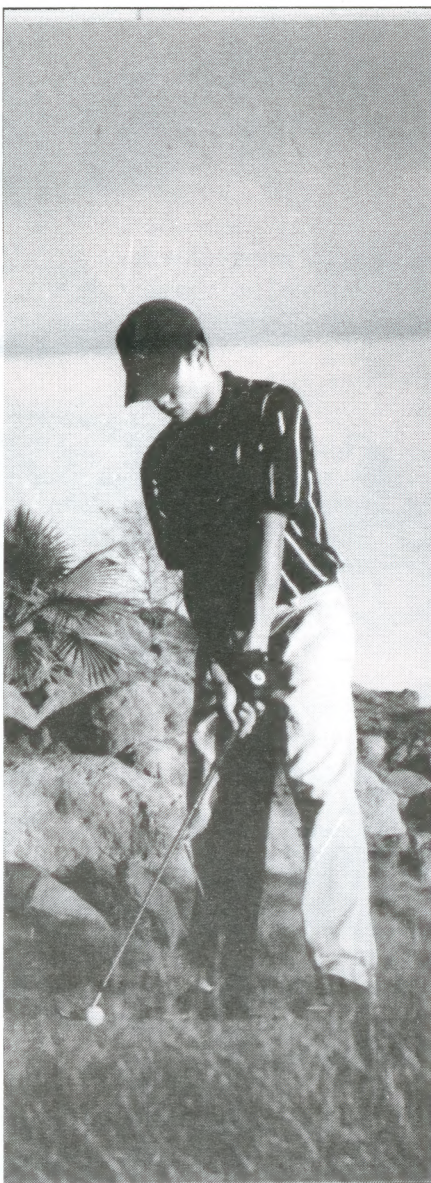
The same thing was said last year, but that does not take away from the indisputable fact that this year's team has an excellent shot at NorCal.

Going into the TCAL tournament in first place, barring some unforeseen catastrophe, secures the Dons a spot in NCS. The one thing the tournament will decide is the two top teams for all-league honors. In the NCS tournament, the Dons will have to be in the top three to go on to NorCal.

This season has been one that Scott has to examine under a microscope, so he can figure out how to carbon copy it for next year. Other than the loss to Las Lomas in their season opener, which was due to an unfamiliar course, the Dons have been undeniably the most dominant team in the league. In their second and third games of the season, the Dons played Miramonte. These two matches were easily their most important of the season. If the Dons lost both games they would have been down 0-3, and Miramonte up 5-0, putting them in a depressing

situation with little chance of reviving their season. But the Dons overcame the Mators in both matches with a first match score of 198-215 and a second narrow victory of 200-205.

Scott attributes his team's success to its large roster. Most teams have four premium players and two average players fielding their six-man team. The Dons are strong in all six spots with players to spare.



Courtesy Photo

Senior Greg Lau tees off in the Dons' league match at Oakhurst Country Club.

Junior Sean Baldwin shot a staggering six under par 66 this season, an accomplishment that Scott stated to be the highlight of his career. Senior Conor Deal had a performance for the highlight reel at the Orinda Country Club, in two nine-hole matches with a 1 under 35, and 1 under 37 this season.

The Dons will have to choose the top six players out of their nine-player rotation for the NCS tournament. The nine-man rotation consists of seniors Brian Duckworth, Conor Deal, Elliot Randall, and Greg Lau. Backing up this stronger than titanium core of veterans are juniors Casey Zeman, Sung Kwon, Sean Baldwin, and sophomores Zack Messer and Younggi Choi.

The only question that remains unanswered is whether or not the Dons repeat their unsuccessful bid, or dance in the ring of fire at the NorCal tournament? Hopefully the twelfth year will be the year.

SWIMMING

By Srinivas Gupta

Staff Writer

The Dons were not competitive in the recent Quad Meet held at the Campolindo Soda Center last Thursday, April 27.

The Quad Meet is a much anticipated, district wide swimming and diving competition. The battle for first place was between Campo and Miramonte. The winner was determined by the final relay of the meet. In a close dramatic race, the Cougars out-touched the Mats and took home the title by two points. Las Lomas was a near third with Acalanes trailing in fourth.

Dons swimmers didn't seem phased by their defeat. In a meeting with the varsity team coach, Jeff Miller told his swimmers, "Don't be discouraged. The only meets we need to concentrate on are TCAL and North Coast."

In spite of an overall disappointing finish, some individual highlights were Gina Sulprizio's second place finish in the 200-IM with a time of 2:13, and Danny Holligan's third place finish in the 100M breast stroke.

TENNIS

Last Match of Season a Success for Dons

By Kristy Mayer and Lauren Gong
Co-Copy Editor and Staff Writer

The boys' tennis team lost its game against Miramonte on Tuesday, April 18, but won their season-ending game against Las Lomas, pushing its record to 9 wins and 5 losses.

The number one and two single players were both victorious in the two Dons' wins over Miramonte. Junior Dylan Tubelle, with scores of 6-3 and 6-4, and sophomore Matt Baca walked away victorious, and the game ended with a 6-1, 6-2 victory.

After the singles matches the Dons still could have won if they had taken all three doubles matches, but Miramonte swept the doubles games in three close sets.

The Dons' weakness in doubles is a problem that has plagued the team for most of the season. Coach Tony Hennig offered an explanation for the weakness.

"I think the reason we didn't win doubles was because of a lack of concentration, and (because) we don't have depth with the

doubles because we have a lot of young and unexperienced players," said Hennig.

In their Friday, April 19th match against Benicia, Acalanes suffered another loss with a final score of 4-5. Benicia and Acalanes split the singles matches, leaving doubles responsible for another loss.

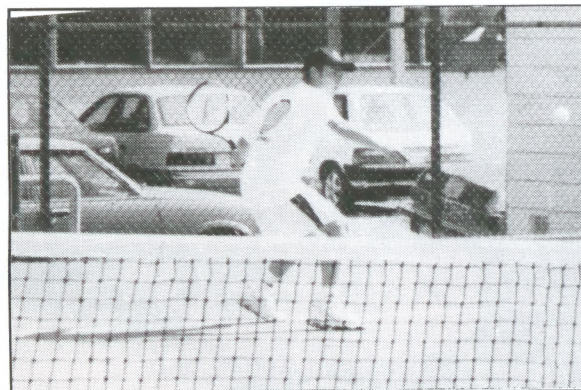
The Dons ended the season with a match against Las Lomas, winning 6-3. The number one singles game was played by Tubelle. The match was played out in two close sets, but ended in a loss for Acalanes.

"It was a hard match against Las Lomas because I was paired up against one of the best players in the league, but I feel like I played well," said Tubelle.

Although the Dons finished the season with a solid record, it is still unclear whether or not they made it into North Coast. The boys' tennis team feels like

they gave it their best effort this season either way.

"It's kind of disappointing we didn't play as well as we did last season, but each game was hard fought and the competition is what we live for," said senior Andy Byrne.



Blueprint Photo/Thomas Kuio

Junior Dylan Tubelle rockets a forehand towards his Freedom opponent in a home game against Freedom. Tubelle won his match 6-0, 6-1.

SOFTBALL

Dons Swept off Field by Matador Menace

By Hiro Kagiya
Business Editor

The Dons walked away from a scorched battlefield with their heads hung low, while the Green Menace rode high on the chariot of victory. The Dons looked back to their place of defeat, yet they were not depressed at the sight before them.

The Dons lost 4-1 against the colossal Miramonte team on Thursday, April 27, in a hard fought game that had both its ups and downs. The Dons left their season with a 7-6 record overall and 3-5 record in TCAL.

The game started off poorly for the Dons as Miramonte came to the plate poised and ready to attack. The Matadors came out with fire in their eyes and by the end of the first inning, Miramonte's Amy Levinson and Anna Leberman hit in Erin DeMartini and . The score was left unchanged until the third inning, when Leberman made a great hit and knocked in Stephanie Smith.

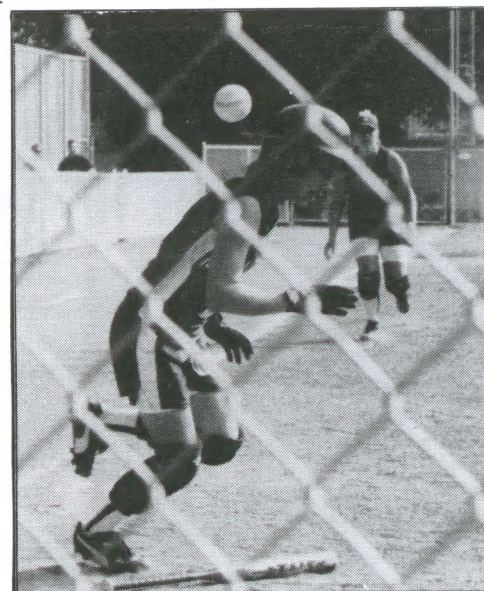
The Dons finally woke up in the fourth,

realizing that they were down 3-0, and decided to do something about it. Junior Leah Smith started the rally by hitting a beautiful shot directly between center and left field. This was followed by a great bunt by junior Alicia Adams, who took one for the team and put Smith into scoring position. After a wild pitch, Smith took off like a banshee and made it home. Unfortunately, she was forced to return to third after the umpire said the ball nicked the Dons' hitter junior Julia Wilcox. Karma seemed to laugh at the umpire's dubious call, as senior Robin Flier cracked a ball into center field sending Smith home.

But the run seemed to be too little too late, as the Dons found themselves down two with Miramonte at bat. Their fears seemed to be justified as Miramonte's Ava Holliday hit a single followed by a triple by Emily Warner, putting the score at 3-1.

At that point, the Dons were unable

to get back in the game and the final score remained 4-1 through the last inning.



Blueprint Photo/Sophia Maund

Freshman Chase Facer hits a foul ball in a recent loss against Miramonte on Thursday, April 27.

ATHLETES OF THE ISSUE

Gina Sulprizio

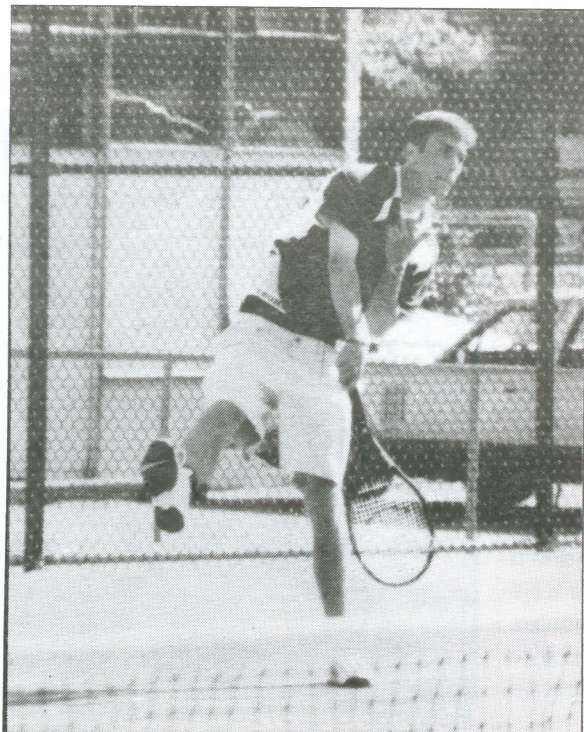
Freshman swimmer Gina Sulprizio has been training with the United States Swimming Team for five years, and she is among the Acalanes swimming elite. All of this equates to many more years of continued success for Acalanes, and ample time for even more improvement in Sulprizio's swimming. Sulprizio swims the 200-yard IM and the 500-yard freestyle for the team, and she placed second in both of her events at the 14 team Mission Viejo Invitational. In a quad-meet against Las Lomas, Campolindo, and Miramonte, Sulprizio again placed second in both of her events against teams that are at the top of the list in NCS ranking. The NCS playoffs admits the top forty swimmers in each event out of 103 teams. The goal Sulprizio has set is to be in the top eight in both of her events. The stratosphere is the limit for Sulprizio, and her instant success on the swim team has only just begun. "At the rate she is training, she is going to be setting herself up to be one of the top swimmers in the section for the next four years," said Coach Jeff Miller. Because of her devotion to her sport, and her devotion to success, Gina Sulprizio is Female Athlete of the Issue.



Blueprint Photo/Joanna Dahlhauser

Devin Gallo

Senior team captain Devin Gallo was at the top of his game last year, when he played number one doubles for the Acalanes tennis team. Gallo teamed up with Dwight Lee and only lost two matches throughout the year, including NCS games. This year Gallo was needed as the number six singles player and unselfishly wedged into the vacant spot, utilizing his versatility as the glue that held the team together. Gallo is a four-year varsity veteran and has been poised to contribute to the team in every manner possible. "If he got off the court early, whether he won or lost, he would go out and seek somebody who was struggling, and sit there and root them on too," said Coach Tony Hennig. Playing an unfamiliar position is always difficult, and Gallo has surmounted the challenge. Gallo is an extremely competitive athlete, and he takes his role very seriously, said Hennig. As a result, Devin Gallo is Male Athlete of the Issue.



Blueprint Photo/Thomas Kuo